No 673.] For Week Ending November 23rd, 1901. [One Penny

Digitized by Google

Shilling packets

Kaputine "the" safe Remedy For Headache

WARNING. *Instead of using the common White Headache Powders, which generally consist entirely of a crude drug, which has been condemned as dangerous by the medical papers, insist on having a bona-fide anti-quack remedy, recommended by such eminent medical authorities as Dr. RAMAGE, L.R.C.P., Dr. THURSTIN, L.R.C.P., late Dr. BOYD-WILLIAMS (Liverpool), the Editor of the Medical Journal, "Health," etc., etc. The name of this safe remedy is KAPUTINE.*

ALL LEADING CHEMISTS SELL IT, OR CAN GET IT FOR YOU IN A FEW HOURS.

Sold by BOOT'S, TAYLOR'S, DAY'S, WHITE'S and other Stores. Most Co-operative Stores sell it.

PACKETS, 1/-. SAMPLES ONE PENNY,

or KAPUTINE LIMITED, HUDDERSFIELD, will send it FREE for 12 stamps.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

CUTLERY

J. G. GRAVES' "ENTERPRISE" PARCEL.

The Finest Value ever offered to the British Public.

CONTENTS:—6 White Handle Table Knives, 6 Dessert Knives, 6 Table Forks, 6 Dessert Forks, 2 Table Spoons, 6 Dessert Spoons, 6 Tea Spoons, 6 Egg Spoons, 2 Salt Spoons, 2 Mustard Spoons, 1 Moist Sugar Spoon, 1 pair Sugar Tongs.

A Silver Mounted Bread Knife of guaranteed quality is included in each parcel.

J. G. GRAVES is the only Manufacturer who supplies the Public direct, and the whole of the above-named Goods are Manufactured in the Firm's own Factory in Sheffield.

51 Articles for 25s.

HOW TO PAY ...

1st WAY.—Send 5s. to start with, and complete the purchase in six more payments of 5s. and one of 4s.

2nd WAY.—Send 5s. to start with, and, if you are satisfied, send the balance of 22s. in one payment, and J. G. GRAVES will send, in addition, a HANDSOME PAIR OF CARVERS. If you are not thoroughly satisfied, return the goods, and your deposit will be instantly refunded in full.

Send for J. G. GRAVES' NEW CATALOGUE of Watches, Jewellery, Clocks, Cutlery and Plate, and Fancy Goods.

WANTED AGENTS.—Persons in regular employment who can introduce New Customers should write for terms.

J. G. GRAVES

69 Division st., SHEFFIELD.

GENUINE

SOLID SILVER WATCH FREE.

(LADY'S OR GENT'S SIZE.)

1/-

We guarantee these Watches to be **Solid Silver** and Government stamped, with first-class movements, and far superior to Watches generally sold as Real Silver. Our **Gift Watches** are catalogued at 30/- each, but to introduce our **Bargain Price List** and absolutely defy competition we will send you one of these Watches **FREE**. If you take advantage of our marvellous offer which we will send. If you want one, write to us without delay. With your letter send us 1/- by postal order, or stamps, for one of our splendid Ladies' or Gents' Watch Guards, to wear with the Watch, equal in appearance to a £5 Real Gold article. After you receive the beautiful Watch, we shall expect you to show it to your friends, and call their attention to this advertisement, and to mention that the Watch is guaranteed for 5 years.—Dept. F. **Hyde Park Watch Co., Delamere Crescent, London, W.**

DO YOU WANT A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT ?

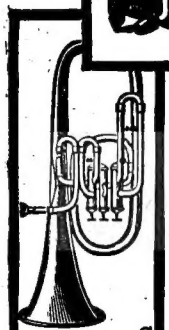
J. M. DRAPER supplies any description of Musical Instrument

Direct From Factory at Factory Prices.

For Cash or Easy Terms.

Our Speciality is the Famous

ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE.



Simplest and most complete instrument made. A Child can Play it. No teaching required.

Cash Price, 35s. Easy Payments, 40s. (10s Deposit, 5s Monthly). Worth £4 4s.

Catalogue gives full description.

New Illustrated Catalogue Free.

Sent Free on Application. Write for a copy to-day.

J. M. DRAPER, Dept. 309, Organette Wks. Blackburn

DON'T COUGH USE KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH.

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU, "there is no better Cough Medicine." —One gives relief: if you suffer from cough try them but once: they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1½d. tins.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

TOOTHACHE

CURED INSTANTLY BY

BUNTER'S NERVINE

Prevents decay. Saves extraction. Sleepless nights prevented. It removes Neuralgic Headache and all Nerve Pains. Of all Chemists 1/1½.

KAYE'S WORSDELL'S PILLS

100 years worldwide use proves them the BEST FAMILY MEDICINE

Of all Chemists 1/1½, 2/9 & 4/6 per box.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb.; and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES.

No. 673.] For the Week Ending November 23rd, 1901. [ONE PENNY.

Adventures of an Actress.

For one fleeting moment Jenny stood as if paralysed.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTRESS.

XVI.—A LIFE FOR A LOVE.

By DONOVAN MART.

CHAPTER I.

The Firing of the Train.

Nowhere is the spirit of cliqueism more rampant than among the ranks of a travelling theatrical company and the members of the *Good Samaritan* Company were no less addicted to cliques than any other of their kindred professionals.

In the first place there were those who radiated round the beautiful "lead," Hazel Harlow, and as amongst these could be numbered Raymond Venables the manager, Eric Monteith, Jenny Lovelace, and a good many of the men, it will be readily understood that this set predominated. It was among the other ladies of the company that divergence of opinion as regards Hazel was most to be looked for, and the reason for this can be put down to one cause—jealousy.

Hazel was practically a newcomer in the ranks of her profession, yet with a bound she had cleared the heads of many who thought themselves altogether superior to her in looks and histrionic abilities, hence there was much heart-burning among those who had not come under the influence of Hazel's sweet personality. A girl of the latter class was Ethel Montrose, Hazel's understudy, a girl who had undoubtedly pretensions to good looks, who was also vivacious, and a fair actress, yet without enough depth of mind to ever make herself pre-eminent in her profession.

Yet Ethel Montrose had a grievance. Her ground for complaint was that she had never yet been given a really adequate chance to display her talent. How could she ever hope to show the world her powers if she were always doomed to be another's understudy?

This view she aired amongst those of her companions whom she knew were actuated by the same feelings as herself, dislike, or in other words, jealousy, of Hazel Harlow. Yet there was one person who lent a ready ear to her complaints from other motives than that of mere dislike to the more favoured actress, and that was a young actor, Harold Kenrick, who played a subordinate part in the piece, and was head over ears in love with Ethel Montrose.

Liverpool had been reached, and already the *Good Samaritan* Company had given the first performance at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, the pretty playhouse in Clayton Square, and once more indorsement of Hazel Harlow's power and beauty had been rendered by a crowded audience.

After the performance Kenrick had induced Ethel Montrose to accompany him to supper at a certain well-known hotel in Bold Street. He had determined to bring affairs to a head, to disclose to his companion in words what he had hitherto only hinted at in a hundred minor ways, his undying love and desire to make her his wife. He was not long in coming to the point.

"I have been long waiting," he said, during a pause in the meal, and speaking in a low, nervous voice, "to have an opportunity of seeing you alone, Ethel, only you have always been with one or another of the crowd, and I have never had a decent chance. Anyhow, you must know what I am going to say, you must know that I love you madly"—this with that slight affectation of theatrical pose that most actors find it so hard to get away from in real life—"will you become my wife?"

The girl heard him out in silence, and it was some moments before she answered him. At last she said:

"I like you very much, Harold, better than any other man in the crowd; but at the same time I don't quite know whether I like you enough to marry you, and supposing we did get married, and you were to find someone else you loved better, well"—with an assumption of archness—"what would become of poor little Ethel?"

"You know that is impossible," came the answer in a low voice fraught with suppressed passion. "You know that I would do anything for you; that I would simply die for you. Won't you say 'Yes,' Ethel? We'll take a flat in London. I believe I could get a part at one of the theatres, and you, with your beauty and talent, will have no difficulty in getting a good shop somewhere."

The girl laughed somewhat bitterly.

"It's all very well to talk of my beauty and talent," she said, "but it hasn't done me much good so far, except to get me Hazel Harlow's understudy."

She gave vent to an impatient exclamation.

"It's really a shame," she went on; "how Venables and all of them kowtow to Hazel Harlow. I'm sure I'm every bit as good an actress as she is, and if only I got a chance of playing Ruth, I'm sure I could convince everybody of the fact."

"You are quite right, darling," answered the man. "I, and everyone else with any sense, know that Hazel Harlow can't really hold a candle to you, but you haven't given me my answer yet."

The girl looked at him scrutinisingly. Her shallow little brain was still running on the idea that possessed her, namely of her superiority to Hazel, and she had not really room in her mind to consider two subjects at once.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

Then suddenly Kenrick's impassioned glances started a new train of thoughts within her.

"Supposing," she began, "that I were to consent to become your wife, would you be ready to give me some tangible proof of your affection, because, after all, it's only right that I should test you if I've got to tie myself to you for ever."

"Only try me," came the delighted answer. "Anything I can do, I will do."

"Yes, that's just it. I don't know whether you can do it."

"Do what? For goodness' sake don't torture me any more, Ethel. At least give me the chance of trying."

"Very well, I will."

The girl spoke half-banteringly, more as a pretext for putting on one side the attentions of her lover, for whom, if truth must be told, she had not sufficient regard from the point of view of a future wife. "Contrive that I shall play the part of Ruth for one week on tour, and I'll promise to marry you. There!"

She finished up with a little laugh, little thinking what the result of her words were to be. Had she only divined the consequences of her foolish freak, she would then, once and for all, have quelled any hope in her lover's breast of complying with his desire, for she was not radically bad. Foolish and flighty she might be, but not a criminal.

"Get you to take Hazel Harlow's part for one week?" echoed Kenrick moodily; "that's rather a tall order. Not that I am sure you wouldn't play Ruth every bit as well."

"That's just it," broke in the girl; "I'm quite sure I could, and if I was to be given a real look in who knows what it might lead to. Venables might say 'Well, we never knew what a genius we had in Miss Montrose.' It might lead to my becoming the star of the company."

She spoke without thinking, trying to believe that she knew there was truth in what she said, though in her heart of hearts she knew otherwise. She knew perfectly well that she stood on a different plane from Hazel, that she would never be able to reach the level of excellence attained by her more successful rival. And Kenrick, infatuated as he was, quite believed that she was everything she said, nay more, the idea took shape and began to grow within him that it was merely a question of personal spite, that Ethel was being kept from the place she ought to occupy by the intrigues of Hazel Harlow.

"Then you are really in earnest?" he said. "You promise to marry me if you are able to act the part of Ruth for six consecutive nights?"

The girl was secretly somewhat perturbed at his quiet seriousness. Then she broke into a laugh.

"Yes," she said, "I am serious. On the sixth night following a week's performance in which I have taken the part of Ruth, I'll give you my promise to become Mrs. Kenrick."

"Then Mrs. Kenrick you shall become." There was something terribly sinister about the quiet air of finality with which the few simple words were spoken.

CHAPTER II.

The Storm Threatens.

It was an everyday occurrence for Hazel Harlow to receive at the theatre a great number of letters, nearly all of them from men desirous of making her acquaintance. Invitations to supper, to lunch, begging letters, letters from unsuccessful actors and actresses, these and many others she received from day to day. On the Tuesday after their opening performance in Liverpool there were as usual three or four communications, among them a note of somewhat different calibre to the usual collection. The note in question ran as follows:

"Miss Hazel Harlow is warned by a friend and well-wisher to at once relinquish her part and to abandon all idea of succeeding as an actress. Miss Harlow is undoubtedly a woman of beauty and charm, but her sphere does not lie upon the stage. She is only standing in the way of those whose heart is in their profession, and would be well advised to abandon as soon as possible any further connection with theatrical life. Unless this letter is complied with Miss Harlow may find herself in a very awkward predicament."

"There! What do you think of that?" cried Hazel, handing the note to her companion, Jenny Lovelace.

The two girls were in Hazel's dressing-room. Jenny took the missive and read it through carefully.

"This was written by a maniac," she answered. "Someone who is completely off his or her head. It's unsigned, and undated, and written evidently in a disguised hand. Are you going to take any notice of it, Hazel?"

"I think I shall show it to Eric," answered the latter. "He may recognise the handwriting."

But Monteith could throw no light upon the epistle.

"It's my idea," he said, when the note was shown to him a little later, "that it was written by someone who is wildly jealous of Hazel's success, but I don't really think it's worth taking any notice of. Anyway, forewarned is forearmed, and we shall have to keep our eyes skinned, as the Yankees say." And so, for the time, the matter dropped.

Hazel took no notice of the mysterious letter, and, indeed, banished the occurrence from her mind. As a matter-of-fact, this was the first move in the game set on foot by the foolish jealousy of Ethel Montrose, and it was the work of Kenrick, who had lost no time in setting his machinations on foot.

He was indeed at his wits' end to know how to accomplish the task imposed upon him, and yet with the end in view that was held out to him he had determined to lose no time in proceeding with his plans. He knew, as did all the Company, that Hazel had on more than one occasion been made the victim of a conspiracy. He knew how often her life had been jeopardised, though he did not know the real reason at the back of the whole story.

He had some vague idea that the adventures through which Hazel had gone had been instigated to a certain extent by herself in order to advertise the charms that he could not understand.

"Yet, if she really had been in danger," he argued, "she would be chary of courting any further. If, therefore, I can intimidate her sufficiently, she will throw up the sponge and leave the road clear for Ethel. And if I can once get her away from the Company it is inevitable that Ethel must take her place."

Thus in secret he watched whether his anonymous communication would bear any fruit. But another day passed away and Hazel showed no sign of being perturbed by the unusual epistle she had received, and so he determined on stronger action.

Again an anonymous note was found among Hazel's letters, and this time the wording was much stronger.

"Unless, after to-night, you hand in your resignation to Mr. Venables, and once and for all leave the *Good Samaritan* Company the result of your conduct will be upon your own head. Your stay with the *Good Samaritan* Company has already been productive of enough

Digitized by Google

unhappiness. You are the Jonah of the voyage, and must be cast overboard. Therefore take this warning and disregard it at your peril. If you leave the Company you will have nothing to fear. If you stay on your blood be upon your own head."

The handwriting was identical with the first one Hazel had received of like character. But there was such an unmistakable air of vindictiveness about the missive that a vague feeling of alarm grew up in Hazel's breast that danger really threatened her. She took counsel with Eric and Raymond Venables as to what she had best do, and it was Venables who came forward with a proposition that seemed likely to help her.

"Let us publish the note," he said, "publicly, and offer a big reward for the writer of it. This sort of thing is intolerable. It surely can't be anyone in the Company and yet it reads to me very like professional jealousy. Let's publish it as I say and offer a large reward for the discovery of the person who wrote it."

But Hazel was strongly averse to his course of action, and Eric came forward with much wiser counsel.

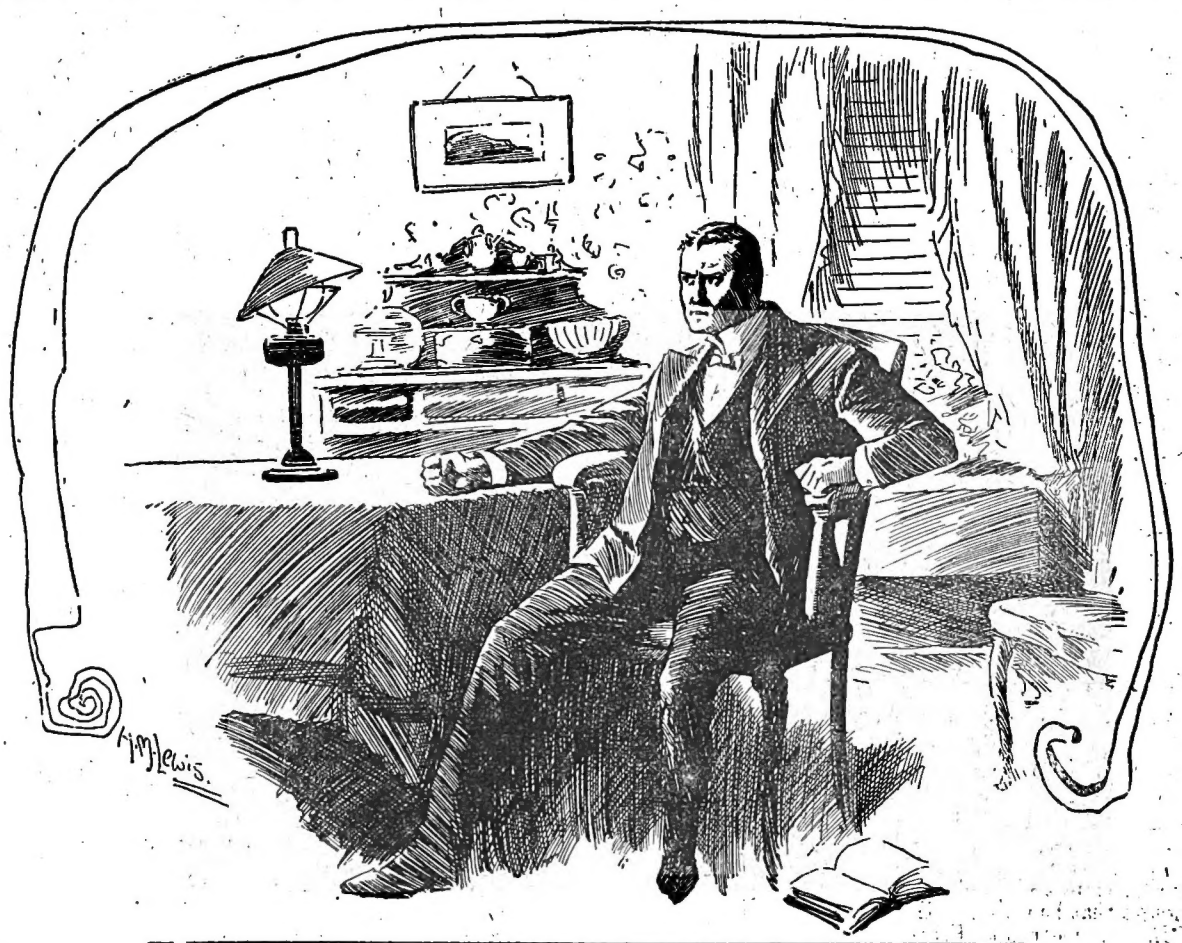
"I am of opinion," he said, "that the letter is written by one of the other members of the Company. Let's call them all together and read out the note. I'll keep my eyes on them while it is being read and surely we shall be able to spot the culprit if she or he exists in our own ranks."

"That's not a bad idea," answered Venables; "and even if it is unproductive I really don't think Hazel need be frightened. We have learnt experience on this tour, and we ought to be able to insure the non-repetition of any of the horrors that have gone before. But still, if the perpetrator of this note is in our midst, the affair had better be stopped before it gets any further on our nerves."

"Then I should suggest," said Monteith, "that the whole Company be assembled upon the stage of the theatre; that Venables makes one of his telling speeches, and I will try and give my capabilities as an amateur detective full rein. It's my opinion that someone is trying to play a stupid practical joke upon Hazel."

The proposal having been thus set on foot, practical demonstration was soon forthcoming. With feelings of the intensest mystification the Company was assembled, and Venables stepped forward primed for his speech.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began suavely, "I have called you here to-day upon a matter that touches one of your members very intimately, and knowing as I do that I have to deal with honourable men and women, I have no compunction in taking you fully into my confidence. But the fact of the matter is that Miss Harlow



He threw himself into a chair, his eyes burning brightly as the light of a hideous resolve flamed up within them.

Digitized by Google

has been the recipient of a threatening letter which I think it would be the best for me to read out to you as she has handed it to me naturally under some alarm."

Hereupon the manager produced the last threatening missive that Hazel had received, and read it out in a clear, penetrating voice.

A faint hum of astonishment followed the recital of the epistle, and Venables, allowing a few seconds to elapse so that the full purport of what he had just read might soak into the minds of the assembled Company, continued:

"If there is any one present who has any light to throw upon this extraordinary document the least he or she can do is to step forward and speak out, for I take it that I am dealing with honourable people, and I can hardly believe that there is anyone among you capable of such an outrage on good breeding."

Again he paused. A clamour of indignant denial of any complicity in the matter arose on every hand. There was nothing left therefore but for Venables to thank the assembly for having listened to him.

After the meeting had broken up Venables made his way, as arranged, to Monteith's room.

"Well," cried the manager, "has our detective any report to make? Were you able to deduce anything from the faces of the crowd?"

Monteith paused for a moment.

"I did notice one rather suspicious thing," he said cautiously, "and that was that Ethel Montrose, who was standing in front, went very pale when you began speaking and then got very red. Well, we know that woman is a bundle of nerves, and perhaps surprise may account for her exhibition of nervousness, yet at the same time Miss Ethel is Hazel's understudy, and, as I have good reason to know, would give her empty little head to be in Hazel's shoes. It may be—mind you this is only a theory—that her hand penned the note merely with the idea of getting Hazel to relinquish her part so that she herself might be given a chance of showing what she could do as Ruth. If my theory is correct, I don't believe we need have any serious cause for alarm because I don't believe Miss Ethel is of the stuff that makes a murderess. She'll merely want watching."

"The easiest way out of it," broke in Venables, "is to give her the sack, or to tax her direct with being the writer of the note."

"Now that's just like you, Venables, rushing into extremes the moment an idea is mooted. If you did sack her she would indeed have a motive for paying off old scores against Hazel, and goodness knows, we've got our hands full enough in looking after our 'lead' without having any fresh factor dragged into the business."

There was undoubted commonsense in this view of the case, and Venables thought the same. It was therefore determined to do nothing further in the matter except to keep a keen eye upon the doings of Ethel Montrose, for of course it was admitted that they might be on a wrong scent altogether, and the note might have been inspired from sources outside the Company.

The hand of Horace Caldecott, the one that had already brought so much trouble into Hazel's life, might possibly have something to do with this new phase. Yet neither Venables nor Monteith could divine how near to and yet how far they were from the true motive that had inspired the clandestine communication.

In the meantime Ethel Montrose had sought out Harold Kenrick.

"So this is your doing," she began excitedly; "you have already begun to turn out Hazel Harlow from the Company."

She spoke in a voice in which fear and hope struggled for mastery.

"And what if I have?" came the dogged answer. "I'm going to win you somehow. You must leave me to take my own steps in achieving my object."

A sudden terror clutched at the girl's heart. There was something terribly sinister in Kenrick's manner.

"What are you going to do next?" she asked fearfully.

"I don't quite know," answered Kenrick in the same sullen tone; "but you can trust me, darling. Before many days are out you will be finding yourself called upon to fill the *role* of Ruth. All is fair in love and war. Don't forget that, and besides, I am as firmly convinced as you are that you will do far more credit to the part than Hazel Harlow. I am not alone in my belief. I have been casually inquiring of one or two of the others and they quite agree with me it's all a put-up job. Venables is sweet on Hazel Harlow, and he's running her for all he is worth. There'll be no chance for anyone else so long as she holds the stage."

The girl was silent for a few moments, then cowardice mingled with an unwelcome thrill of satisfaction to think that this man was willing to dare so much for her sake made her resolve to let him go on with whatever he had before him.

"Very well, then," she said finally; "if you have really got a scheme that will insure my taking Ruth's part I shan't say any more, but will only wait to see how you are going to carry it out. But I think it will be best if we are seen as little as possible together, then nobody's suspicions will be aroused, and you will be able to work on without a handicap. But take a word of warning and keep your eye on Eric Monteith. He's a deep one, he is. I advise you to keep out of his way. I shan't give him any ground for suspicion." And in making this resolve the girl was in reality doing the very best she could to further her lover's schemes, whatever they were, for although she was not cognisant of the fact, as we know, she was the very person towards whom the finger of suspicion pointed.

"Oh, I'm not afraid of Monteith," answered Kenrick carelessly; "he's too much wrapped up in the fair Hazel."

CHAPTER III.

Dark Doings.

Having fully recognised that his first attempt to oust Hazel Harlow had failed, it can be well imagined that Harold Kenrick only made up his mind to concentrate his attentions more fully upon devising a scheme that might bring success to his frenzied machinations.

The power of a true pure love upon a man is too well-known, and its possibilities too potent to need of amplification here, but with a man like Kenrick, who had come under the influence of an all-absorbing passion, the result was the reverse of anything that might militate for good. All his spare moments were given up to brooding over the fancied slight offered to the object of his fierce affections, and the more he pondered the more his passion grew, and with it the resolve to bring about the discomfiture of Hazel Harlow, no matter what the cost might be.

A hundred mad schemes floated through his brain only to be rejected each in turn for another still more

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

mad. The fancied wrongs offered to Ethel Montrose became a terrible reality, and thus the monomania, fed by the fires of his jealous passion, grew and grew until at last he had scarcely another thought. And although Eric Monteith had, true to his word, kept a careful eye upon Hazel's understudy, he could discover nothing in her actions or behaviour to justify the suspicion that had been awakened by her conduct on the occasion of Venables' harangue.

And as the days passed by and the final hours of the sojourn of the *Good Samaritan* Company in Liverpool drew ever nearer, it became forced upon him more and more acutely that he had been on the wrong track. The anonymous letter must have been sent outside the Company. And yet it was strange that since Venables had made its contents public property among the members of the Company there had been no repetition of a like unwelcome communication. This fact undoubtedly pointed to the letter having been inspired by one of his own colleagues. All these surmises gave Monteith ground for apprehension, and he was all the more vigilant to keep an eye upon Hazel.

Hazel herself viewed his forebodings with that cheery optimism that none of her previous adventures had ever been able to entirely quell.

"Depend upon it it was a practical joke," she said. "We shall hear no more about it."

And Eric, anxious only to guard the woman he loved, from more annoyance than need be, appeared to concur with her surmise. He kept his own forebodings locked up within his breast. Yet had Monteith or Hazel Harlow been possessed of the power of second sight they would on the Thursday night during their stay at Liverpool, after the performance was concluded, have noticed a strange occurrence in the room taken by Harold Kenrick. Seated at his table with a lamp before him the actor was poring over a book, a volume that he had picked up that same day at a second-hand bookstall, that treated of a no less sinister subject than "Poisons and Poisoners."

To such a state had his morbid desire conveyed him that Ethel Montrose's lover had already determined upon a desperate step. He had now resolved that there was one way, and one only, to remove the barrier that existed between himself and Ethel Montrose—the living barrier, Hazel Harlow—and that expedient was murder. How he was to achieve his terrible end he had not yet fully worked out in detail, but the train of thought that was in him had received further impetus by the discovery of the little book in the obscure bookshop. Thus he sat and pored over the volume, his brain in a whirl with the emotions conjured up by his base purpose.

Yet the book was old and obsolete, and for the most part treated of obscure and forgotten poisons, dealing with the curious compounds that could be made by the admixture of certain alkalis and irritants, the names of which were completely strange to the actor. Old recipes that had been in use in the time of the Borgias, or that had been handed down by wizards and necromancers of the East, filled up a large part of the volume. At last Kenrick flung the book across the room in a pet and began pacing up and down with quick, frenzied strides.

"There's nothing to be got out of that," he muttered morosely; "no chemist would be able to supply me with the things treated of in that old volume. No, it will have to be something that I can get easily, opium or morphia or arsenic, or something like that." He spoke with the utmost callousness as though he were discussing some ordinary everyday occurrence, and had not in his mind the destruction of a young and beautiful woman who had never wilfully done him any harm.

"Well, it's got to be done," went on his thoughts. "There is no other way out of it; the only thing is how can I do it without getting found out, for of course if I am found out it will be good-bye to any hope of ever calling Ethel mine. To call Ethel mine, isn't that enough to fire one to sacrifice a good deal, and besides, it'll only be a just retribution, the overthrowing of a vile conspiracy that has for its object the wilful neglect of true talent and the advancement of the basest favouritism. Who is Hazel Harlow that she should ride roughshod over those to whom she is not fit to hold a candle? It is no crime I am meditating. I merely forestall human justice." And with such ravings the miserable man paced up and down the narrow apartment.

It will be seen from this that affairs with Harold Kenrick were indeed in a parlous state. All his finer instincts, all his better self, had been swamped by his perversion of the word love. He had now turned a deaf ear to all the promptings of his better nature; he had but one motive now in life—the destruction of Hazel Harlow. On to the silent watches of the night and into the small hours of the morning he paced to and fro pondering on how he could best achieve his base ends. At last towards morning an idea seemed suddenly to strike him. He stopped in his feverish pacings up and down, that had been for all the world like those of an animal in a cage, and threw himself into a chair, his eyes burning brightly as the light of a new and hideous resolve flamed up within them.

"Idiot that I was not to have thought of it before!" he muttered. "The thing is simplicity itself; fool I was not to have thought of it before! I have been wasting precious time in devising some intricate scheme, and now I have got a notion that will save me hours of waiting and deliberation. To-morrow is Friday, the last day but one of our stay in Liverpool. Can I but bring off the *coup* to-morrow night, next week will see Ethel installed in the part of Ruth, and then at the end of next week I shall go to her and say, 'Ethel, I have earned the right to make you my wife,' for even if Hazel Harlow be removed from the scene Venables must complete the tour for which he has contracted. Yes, I'll do it—I'll do it!"

Having thus come to so sudden a resolve he went to bed and fell asleep, and slept till ten o'clock on the morning of the next day with all the untroubled serenity of a child. In such curious garb does criminality clothe itself, the instincts of a devil are linked hand-in-hand with the reposefulness of the most perfect innocence.

The next day his first act was to seek out Ethel Montrose, who was astonished to find him suddenly transformed into apparently a very ordinary, calm, every-day individual.

"You said you did not want to be seen with me more than necessary during our stay in Liverpool," he began; "and I should not have come only as we are leaving here in two days I thought it would not matter. And besides, I've hit upon a plan that I feel sure will be the means of transferring the part of Hazel Harlow to you for the rest of the tour."

"For the rest of the tour!" gasped the girl incredulously. "How on earth can that be?"

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

Then something in the man's face filled her with a nameless dread.

"What are you going to do?" she cried.

"I am going to win Ethel Montrose as my wife," was the calm answer. "It's the one thing in life that, from my point of view, is worth living for, and"—his voice changed—"I have your word that you will marry me after you have performed the part of Ruth for one week. I am risking a good deal for you, Ethel, and were it not that I know you will keep your word I might hesitate before going on with the scheme I have elaborated. You will not go back upon your plighted word?"

The girl laughed nervously.

"What I promised I'll do," she said, though her heart was not in her words, and all the time she was groping about in her mind for elucidation of the mysterious plot devised by her lover. What could he be going to do? On what desperate venture was he about to embark? Surely it could not be so desperate as her suspicions would have her believe. He looked calm and cool enough, and yet his face seemed to have become strangely altered in the last few days.

For a few moments Ethel Montrose entertained the idea of going to Venables or Monteith and warning them that a scheme was afoot that had the downfall of Hazel Harlow for its ultimate object. And then that love of mystery and of power that so often strikes a dominant note in a woman of her composition, banished the fleeting resolve. She would let things take their course.

CHAPTER IV.

The Storm Breaks.

The bookings at Liverpool had been exceptionally large, and Venables noted with satisfaction that he would be able on that night to put up the placard "House Full" outside the theatre. Before the commencement of the performance he and Eric were talking together in the latter's dressing-room.

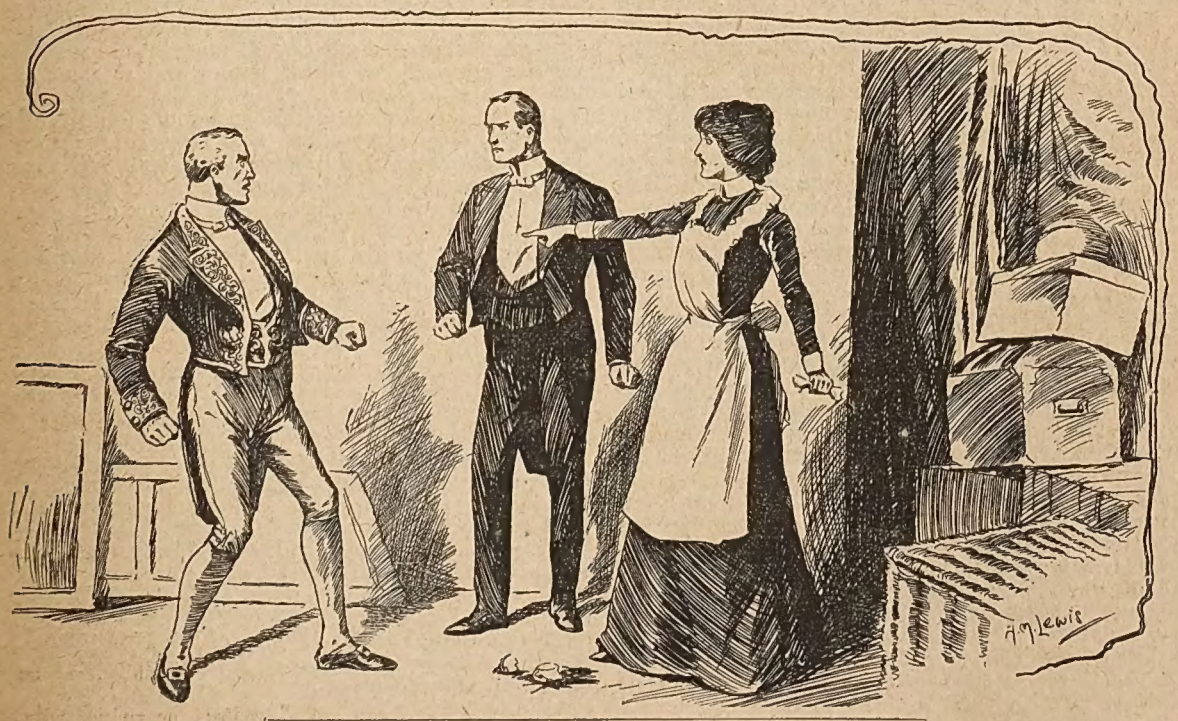
"It's been a bumper week," said the manager, "and it really looks as if we are going to get away from Liverpool without having to add another horror to the long list of those that have dogged our footsteps all through The more I think of it, the more I feel convinced that those two bogus notes that Hazel received at the beginning of the week were the attempts of some fool to perpetrate a practical joke."

"For goodness' sake don't let us shout till we are out of the wood," put in Monteith quickly. "I believe I am as much of an optimist at heart as any man living, but Heaven knows there has been little reason for optimism lately, and the worst of it is the enemies one has to combat are all snakes in the grass, so to speak. One can never really know from which side the next danger will come. If my experiences have been the average ones of the travelling actor, well, all I can say is, I wonder that the lunatic asylums of England aren't crammed full of raving maniacs who have, at one time or another, been the shining lights of provincial theatres."

Venables gave vent to an uneasy laugh.

"Well, let's hope for the best," he said; "to lapse into platitudes—what can't be cured must be endured."

At last the curtain went up on the first act of *The Good Samaritan*, and the first two scenes composing the act passed off without a hitch. The culminating scene of the play took place in the second act. This scene opened at a big assembly in a London drawing-room, where the guests were gathered together after dinner drinking coffee. Ruth, as the centre figure, was the



"Have him arrested, Mr. Venables. I tell you he wanted to murder Hazel Harlow."

Digitized by Google

rich daughter of a man who had disappeared from England when she was quite a child, and was supposed to have been lost at sea. Ruth being possessed of great wealth, had determined to devote her money to charity. In the middle of the act a man enters the room hatless, breathless, dirty and dishevelled. This is Ruth's father, who amassed his wealth by criminal means. He has come back to England, only to fall into the hands of the police. He manages to make his way to his daughter's house, acknowledges his identity, and is arrested in the midst of the fashionable assembly. Thus Ruth discovers that the money she has devoted to charitable purposes has been amassed by fraud, and she is the daughter of a convict. The curtain falls on this denouement.

Now, as this scene was a particularly trying one for Hazel, Venables had arranged that instead of a cup of the weak wash that passed as coffee being handed to Ruth, a cup of strong beef-tea should be given to her as a preparation for the very trying scene that followed. The curtain went up upon the brightly-arranged stage filled with its well-dressed crowd. Hazel was seated at the back of the stage, as she did not take up a prominent position among the characters till her great scene came. Jenny was not on in this scene, and she stood in the wings carelessly watching the countenances of her fellow-actors and actresses. Suddenly she became aware that Harold Kenrick was standing close by dressed in the garb of a footman, his part, waiting to hand round the coffee to the assembled guests. He was a man that she had never much cared about, so she drew aside without speaking. Then something in his face arrested her attention. He was looking at someone on the stage with a strange intentness, with eyes that seemed to burn as though fed by some unseen fire. She followed his gaze and found the object of his attention was Hazel Harlow. He said nothing; he only stared and stared, and Jenny could see that his lips were moving slightly, as though in answer to the active working of his brain.

"Why on earth does he look at Hazel like that?" said Jenny to herself; "is anything wrong with Hazel?"

But no, there was nothing in Hazel's appearance to warrant such a fierce scrutiny. A vague feeling of alarm and distress sprang up in Jenny's mind. There was something uncanny about Kenrick's behaviour. "He looks for all the world as if he would like to stick a knife in her," continued Miss Lovelace's thoughts.

Then he turned away in order to fetch the coffee cups and the tray upon which he carried them round. Jenny slipped back behind the shelter of a flap and watched him as he made his way to the table upon which the "refreshments" were set, ready for him to carry upon the stage. He picked up the tray, but before doing so he put his hand to his pocket and threw a small piece of crumpled up white paper upon the ground. Then he raised the tray, and at the words that represented his cue, walked pompously forward.

For a moment Jenny hesitated. Then curiosity got the better of her. She sped forward and appropriated the fragment of paper that Kenrick had flung down so carelessly. It was apparently only a creased and crumpled ball of white packing paper, and Jenny unrolled it carelessly without expecting to find anything upon it that would give her a clue to Kenrick's behaviour. But as she smoothed the paper out it was to find a red label attached thereto, a label such as chemists use, with the one word "Poison" printed in black upon it.

The one ominous word suddenly caused Jenny's heart to stand still. Like a flash her brain leapt upon the one and only solution to the business—the one and only explanation to Kenrick's strange behaviour. The poison that had been in that paper he had transferred into the cup of beef-tea destined for Hazel. Jenny did not stop to think of the why or wherefore of such an act, yet somehow she knew that her suspicions were correct. Why Kenrick wanted to poison Hazel she could not divine, but there was no time to pause and reflect over the pros and cons of the case then. Action, swift, decisive action, therein lay the only hope of saving her friend. She hurried back to her place at the wings, consumed by an overpowering fear that Hazel had already lifted the fatal cup to her lips, and that anything she might do was now too late! Ah, what was that? Kenrick had just reached Hazel. He had handed her the cup, he stood over her with his burning eyes fixed upon her face, another moment and his foul deed would have been accomplished. For one fleeting moment Jenny stood as if paralysed. She seemed absolutely incapable of action, a sort of horrid hypnotic spell seemed to have been cast over her. She could only stand and gaze and gaze with wide-open, almost unseeing eyes at the terrible drama that was being enacted before her—a play within a play. And yet how much more terrible was the reality than the fiction.

Then the mist cleared away from Jenny's eyes. She could not rush on the stage and denounce Kenrick before the whole theatre, could not rush on and announce to Hazel that the cup she held in her hand—was already on the point of raising to her lips—was poisoned. No, she must find out some way more subtly drastic than that. Then suddenly an inspiration came to her. It was her only chance. She was dressed in the garb of a middle-class shopkeeper, and might very well have passed for a servant. Throwing open the door that led into the apartment where the guests were supposed to be seated she hurried across to Hazel, just dressed as she was, and cried out in a loud voice:

"For Heaven's sake, mum, don't you go and drink that coffee; the cup you've got in your 'ands was the one I used to mix the mustard in. You'll 'ave your poor little 'eart burnt out of you if you drink it, and yet what a blessing you got that cup and not one of the fine party folk."

This piece of swiftly extemporised gag, extemporised under what trying circumstances no one save Jenny could know. She snatched the cup out of Hazel's hand, and hurriedly left the stage as a roar of laughter rang through the theatre.

As for the actors and actresses themselves they were for a few moments so completely dumfounded by this absolutely unlooked-for piece of business that it was some moments before they could recover themselves sufficiently to proceed with the play. And even when they did they were all left wondering, and Hazel in particular, as to what on earth could be the meaning of such an extraordinary performance on the part of Jenny. It really looked as if the latter had been suddenly seized by a fit of temporary mental aberration.

As she rushed towards the stage Jenny ran full tilt into the arms of Venables.

"What on earth is the meaning of this?" said Venables in a low voice. "Who gave you authority, Miss Lovelace, to interpolate scenes in the play that have no right to be there? This is not a farce."

"No," broke in Jenny quickly. "It's not, but if I

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

had not done what I have it would have been a horrible tragedy."

"What do you mean?" cried Venables.

With a tragic gesture Jenny held out the cup that she had taken from Hazel's hand, and that still contained the liquid that she believed to contain poison.

"As a proof of what I have said," she continued, "take this cup and have the contents analysed."

A sound behind her caused her to turn her head. A figure had come stealthily forward behind the pair who stood in a recess at the back of the wings, a figure who leapt forward, and with a quick jerk, sent the cup flying to the ground, so that it fell with a crash to the floor and the contents oozed away through the dark and dusty flooring boards. It was Kenrick, still dressed as a footman, with powdered hair and smart livery, his grease-painted face showing out livid beneath the patches of colour that only made his countenance more ghastly. Venables sprang forward and seized him by the arm.

"What the dickens do you mean by that?" said Venables in a low voice of concentrated passion. "How dare you be so unmanly? What the dickens, I say, is the meaning of your conduct?"

But Kenrick made no answer. His lips worked, but no sound came.

"I'll tell you what it means," said Jenny in a low and rapid voice; "the cup that Mr. Kenrick has just broken contained poison put in there by his own hand. He wanted, for some reason or other, to murder Hazel Harlow. I found him out just in time, and now he has destroyed the evidence of his own guilt."

"It's a lie," muttered Kenrick hoarsely, finding his voice at last, and now realising to the full the horrible deed that he had attempted to carry through, and the consequences that must fall on his head, he determined on one last desperate effort to save his skin.

"It's a lie!" he repeated. "Miss Lovelace herself put the poison in the cup. She has the very piece of paper in her pocket in which the poison was contained." For in a quick flash Kenrick had realised how it was that Jenny must have found out his act of criminality.

A low cry of horror came from Jenny's lips.

"How can you be so wicked?" she said; "this paper"—producing the incriminating testimony—"you flung away after you had put the poison in the beef-tea. What reason should I have for poisoning my dearest friend? Only a monster such as you could have conceived such an idea. Have him arrested, Mr. Venables. I tell you he wanted to murder Hazel Harlow. Why did he dash the cup from my hand if, as he says, it was my hand that worked the foul deed?"

Venables made a step forward, and laid a hand upon the other man's collar.

"So you add lying to your crimes, do you?" he said, meaningly.

With a cry of baffled rage Kenrick dashed the manager aside. Like an animal at bay he glared around him seeking some means of escape, but the door that communicated with the staircase that led down to the stage-door was on the other side of the stage. The next moment his mind was made up. With a bound he reached the wings, and dashing on to the stage, he rushed madly through the thick of the crowd assembled there, for the crowning episode of the act was at hand. Knocking over two or three of the actors in his course, he sped across the stage, out through the wings on the other side, down the staircase, and out into the street beyond.

For a moment the audience sat spellbound trying to take in the meaning of so extraordinary an unrehearsed performance. Then a murmur of amazement could be heard growing in volume on every side, the culmination of astonishment was reached when the curtain, by Venables' orders, was rung down. In a few moments the manager appeared in front of the curtain.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, and a deep hush at once fell on the vast assembly, "I must beg of your indulgence for a few moments, but we have a temporary hitch in the performance. The fact is, that one of the members of our company has, to use a phrase which I think, fits the case best, run amok. His is only a subsidiary part, and if you will give us time to recover from the depressing episode we will endeavour to proceed with the play in a few moments."

CHAPTER V.

All's Well that Ends Well.

After the performance was over Hazel was astonished to receive a visit from her understudy, Ethel Montrose, who came into her dressing-room with a face as white as a sheet, and without explanation of any kind, flung herself at the actress' feet.

"Oh, Miss Harlow," she wailed, "forgive me, forgive me! I have been very wicked. It's all my fault; but I did not think he would do anything as terrible as that."

"What is the matter, Miss Montrose? I don't understand you. What is all your fault?"

"That Harold Kenrick tried to poison you." And then in quick, disjointed phrases the wretched girl blurted out the whole story of Kenrick's mad infatuation for herself. How that he had told her that jealousy alone kept her from playing the part of Ruth, and how that if she would only consent to be his wife he would guarantee that she took up the part for which at present she was only understudy. She confessed also as to knowing the authorship of the anonymous communications.

"But I never knew that he meant to murder you," she wailed out; "believe me, I am speaking the truth."

Hazel's soft heart was touched by such evident contrition and grief.

"Look here, Miss Montrose," she said, "let's make a bargain, you and I. Let us undertake to keep to ourselves what you have just told me. No one need ever know, and I am quite sure you did not really mean to do me any serious harm."

"Oh, you are too good—too good," said the other, still weeping; "and I thought you quite the reverse."

At that moment the door opened and Jenny entered. Noting her amazement, Hazel went up to her and said:

"Miss Montrose is in great trouble, Jenny. Mr. Kenrick was her lover, and she is miserable to think that she could have wasted her affection on such a man."

True to her word Hazel resolved to shield Ethel Montrose from any complicity in the affair that had nearly ended so disastrously for herself. Neither was her generosity ill-timed or misplaced. From that moment she had no more fervent admirer than Ethel Montrose. As for Kenrick, he had fled out into the night and away to his lodgings not far from the theatre, there to change his somewhat unusual garb for that of a sober citizen. And from that night all trace of him was lost so far as the *Good Samaritan* Company was concerned.

Next week the *Good Samaritan* Company visits Brighton, where Caldecott again appears on the scene.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

That Mysterious Something.

CAPTAIN STOWE is the skipper of one of the finest bark-trimmed ships left in the merchant service. Perhaps it is because we don't see much of him, he being away at sea, that he always gets such a hearty welcome. Certainly the first point he strikes for when on shore is our cosy club room, and we give ourselves up to being entertained by his breezy tales of the sea.

"Want a sea yarn?" said he, "bless yer, I've got more than I could tell if I did nothing else from now till I take my last rest.

"Let's see, the last time I was here I promised you some experiences of the psychology of sea life, didn't I?"

"Right!" we all chorussed.

"I thought so. My memory never fails me when I remember a thing. Now I'm going to tell what, you maybe, you won't like to believe, but it's all as true as that you see me sitting here and putting down this Scotch." Suiting the action to the words.

"That's good stuff, boys," he said, smacking his lips. "I'll tell you a little story about what happened to me as a boy first, and then I'll get into some sea yarns, and see what you can make of them.

"One night, when I was a boy of eleven, I was awakened out of my sleep with a strange feeling of oppression and sat erect in bed. The room was dark, and its contents undiscernible, save where the moonlight streamed through the unshaded window and cast its radiance upon the floor.

"I looked out and saw that it was not yet near dawn; and while I gazed a shadow stole across the vision, as if a passing cloud obscured the sky. Then the light grew brighter, and the blood ceased to move in my veins.

"I could not breathe, move or speak. Only power of sight and consciousness remained to me.

"It was my father's familiar figure, unusual only because of the strange white garments which he wore. They were like some soft mantle, too delicate for human hands to make. His face was turned towards me, and the expression on it was sadder than I had ever seen him wear.

"I tried to speak, but the effort failed, and, motionless, I watched his transparent form recede, pass through the open window and dissolve in the night like a cloud of mist.

"Was I dreaming? No! A country-bred boy of eleven, I was not given to fright, and when this paroxysm of inanimation left me, the grief that flooded my eyes with tears was a reality.

"My father was dead! I was as certain of it as if I were then standing by his coffin, and at last, more from sorrow than anything else, I awoke the household and told them all.

"'You were dreaming,' they all tried to assure me, but I failed to be comforted.

"Did I not know that I was the silent observer of his coming, which was as real as my presence in the kitchen was now?

"Dawn came and I sought refuge in work.

"At breakfast a messenger came with the tidings, 'your father died just before daybreak this morning.'

"I was cool and collected. To me the knowledge of his end had been long enough.

"This was my first experience with the 'something.' I will leave others to name it. I was then a boy of eleven. During the years that have since passed I have travelled in all parts of the world. For nearly forty years I followed the sea and gained all the experience that such a life teaches, from the forecastle to the captain's berth.

"While I am no believer in spiritualism as I have seen it interpreted, and although I do not lay claim to supernatural causes and effects in the daily work of life, still I do think there is something in nature relative to mind transference that scientists have yet to learn about.

"My own experience teaches me that there is a principle of higher intellectual perception than has yet been generally cultivated. I think I must possess it naturally to an unusual degree, for my life has been protected many times by the intervention of some power I do not know about.

"The story of my father's death was literally made known to me as described above. I do not try to explain the circumstances, but I do attest the truth of it.

"At one time I was seaman aboard the 950-ton ship *Astrican*, Captain Webster master. He was a man nearly seventy-five years old, and although deacon of a Methodist church, was a brute on shipboard. He went by the name of old Bully Webster, and made himself generally unpopular by feeding us on beef and wormy ship's bread. We left New Orleans bound for Hull, England, with a load of cotton. The ship was a cumbersome craft, with an old-fashioned rudder that would not steer her within two points of her course.

"When well out to sea we encountered a heavy northeaster, during which four men at the wheel had all they could do to keep her steady. It lasted several days, and finally, worn out with exertion, I went below and turned in. I was asleep almost before I touched the pillow.

"How long I remained unconscious I do not know, but suddenly I was awakened as if someone had roughly shaken me. I opened my eyes, but seeing no one thought I had been dreaming and turned over for another nap.

"Again came the rough call, and a voice in my ear seemed to whisper: 'Danger, go on deck.'

"I jumped out of my berth and ran up out of the forecastle. It was very rough, and I could keep my feet with difficulty.

"Scarcely had I reached the look-out when I saw looming up almost upon us a big ship, that was of a sharper, trimmer build than the *Astrican*.

"I shouted at the top of my voice, 'Hard up your wheel,' and the four seamen, terrorised by the spectacle, threw her away over.

"The stranger discovered us at the same time and fell off. A mighty sea pitched us forward with irresistible force, and instead of being struck on the broadside, as we would have been, but for my warning, the old *Astrican* went bow on through the storm-beaten vessel, and crushed the wooden walls as if they had been pasteboard.

"She sank with all aboard almost instantly, and our own salvation necessitated prompt action with nerve.

"We were leaking forward just at the water-line, where a large hole had been stove in our bow. The upper rigging was all hanging over the side, nearly all of our top works having been carried away.

"The storm abated, but it was twelve days before we got into condition to continue on our course. Then we were badly crippled, but had good weather to aid us.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

"Arriving at Hull we discharged cargo, and loaded with iron for the States. What was the power, or influence, that exerted upon me the warning I have told you? No member of the crew called me, and I am satisfied the second call was not a dream.

"Some years later I sailed as master of a brig, the *Forest*. When off the Jersey shore I turned in, my instruments indicating that I was fifteen miles off shore. In the midst of my sleep I seemed to hear my mother exclaim:

"'John, the *Forest* is among the breakers.'

"I rushed on deck and found the mate in a state of frenzy. Just ahead could be heard the roar of the surf beating upon the rocks. We were thus saved from destruction when less than an eighth of a mile from shore.

"I might cite several similar incidents. There is one that I want to tell you about, however, which can be corroborated by living witnesses.

"When I was one of the crew of a revenue cutter that lay off Porstmouth! I was on watch on the forward deck alone one night.

"Suddenly I felt someone touch my shoulder, and looking round I saw just above my head the figure of my elder brother, who was the captain of a West India brig. He seemed to pause a few minutes on the fore-yards, and then disappeared in the night.

"I immediately asked permission to go ashore, and got it.

"Hurrying to the house of another brother, who lived in Portsmouth, I said:

"'He is dead; I am sure of it. The death is father's over again.'

"They all ridiculed my statements, but two days later a letter was received from his wife conveying the sad intelligence. Getting in from a warm climate he had recklessly exposed himself to the cold and had contracted pneumonia, and died at the very time of my vision. Here was the childhood experience lived over again.

"The most wonderful experience I ever had, though, was when a California gold steamer was lost, I believe, by fire, in the Gulf of Mexico. I was master of the brig *Harvest Moon*.

"One day when the weather was thick, and I had stood for some time in doubt as to my exact whereabouts, suddenly I was struck on one cheek by a land bird, that, after wheeling around my head, flew by me on the other side, striking my ear with stinging force.

"Turning to the man at the wheel, I said:

"'Keep her off two points more. I think we are getting in too close to land.'

"For twenty minutes the mate and I smoked in silence. Then, upon hearing a sound, apparently from over the side, the mate jumped to the rail and shouted excitedly:

"'Good Heavens, captain, we are among a shoal of living people!'

"His words were indeed true. On the smooth surface of the gulf, incased in life protectors, were sixty or more men and women who were among the passengers of the ill-fated steamer. They had been hours in the water and had no hope of rescue, when out of the fog had come the ship so silently that they had not noticed her until she was upon them.

"Was it merely an act of chance that the little bird upon the high sea thus deceived a veteran captain? It seems to me that some other power than man's turned the ship's bows two points off the course laid down on the chart.

"The last accident I can tell you about is more mysterious than all, and can be found recorded in the history of New Bedford, where all the facts are known. Briefly, the story was this:

"A new Bedford whaler commanded by a friend of mine was sailing in the Arctic ocean one night. As the mate on deck looked into the cabin, he says he saw a man sitting at the captain's desk, writing on the log-slate. Half-an-hour later the officer went below, and there he found the command plainly written: 'Keep ship north-west by north till daylight.'

"He did as directed.

"At that hour the captain came on deck, saying, 'Who changed the course?'

"'I did,' replied the mate, 'according to your instructions.'

"'What instructions?' asked the other sharply.

"'Why, those you left on your slate,' said the mate.

"'But I did not leave any,' said the captain; and they went below and with surprise compared the log.

"Sure enough there was the order, but the handwriting was peculiarly fine and altogether unfamiliar.

"Wishing to find the man who had thus planned a very absurd joke, the captain sent for the men, one by one, and got their signatures. Not one resembled the handwriting.

"At this point the look-out shouted: 'A sail,' and soon they came upon another whale ship, the crew of which were literally starving for food.

"Giving relief, the captain of the newly-found craft tendered a receipt, the writing of which was identical with that on the log slate, written hours before in an unknown hand, in the wide ocean, miles away from human life.

"This, perhaps, some of you can explain. I cannot, however. Was there not a mission to be accomplished by that mysterious order: 'Keep ship north-west by north until daylight?'"

GEORGE DAY.

JUST PUBLISHED.

How Shall I Word It?

A Complete Letter-Writer for Men and Women on all Subjects.

By "ONE OF THE ARISTOCRACY."

Cloth Boards, price 1s., *or* 1s. 2*d. post free.*

Among the numerous letters contained in the book are the following:

LETTERS and REPLIES to Application for a Situation as Butler, Clerk, Companion, Cook, Governess, Groom, Housekeeper, Lady's Maid, Secretary, Shop Assistant, Typist—Asking for Characters of a Cook, Housemaid, Nurse—"At Home" Invitations—Breaking of Engagement—Bride's Thanks for Wedding Present—Dance and Dinner Invitations—From a Workman to his Sweetheart—From Gentleman or Lady Announcing his or her Engagement—Gentleman Reproaching his *Fiancee* with being a Flirt—Invitation to be Bridesmaid—Lover to his *Fiancee* offering her her Freedom—Mistress to Servant—Notice to Quit—Letter of Condolence—Proposal from Widower to Widow—Proposal of Marriage—Servant to Mistress—Thanking *Fiance* for Present—To a Doctor—To a Neighbour or a Friend who is ill—To a Tradesman—To an Editor—To Publishers—When Sending Tickets to a Lady—The Best Taste in Notepaper—Rules of Punctuation—Underlining Words—Forms of Address—Ways of Ending Letters, etc., etc.

This Book may be Obtained of all Booksellers, or from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, W.C.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

SEEN YOUR PHOTO IN SHORT STORIES?

IF SO, YOU WILL GET £5.

HERE IS THE SCHEME.

We have in our possession a considerable number of photographs of men, women, and children of all grades of society secured for us by our agents, who have scoured the United Kingdom for this special purpose.

Each week we publish five of these portraits, and to each of the persons thus represented we dispatch the sum of £5, on his or her forwarding a claim on a post-card addressed to PORTRAIT DEPARTMENT, "SHORT STORIES," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Although the persons whose portraits will appear in this competition are quite unknown to us personally, we have their names and addresses in our possession, and, therefore, a claim can be settled at once, without risk of fraud.

We may say that our agents are still at work all over the country. It is, therefore, possible that your portrait may appear at any moment without your knowing it. So you should watch SHORT STORIES.

Is your portrait here? If so, drop us a post-card, and get £5. Five more portraits will appear next week.

All claims in connection with the portraits below must reach the address already given above by Tuesday next, November 26th. Full names and addresses of the correct claimants will appear in succeeding numbers.

HOW TO MAKE A CLAIM FOR A £5 NOTE.

Simply write on a post-card these words:

The Portrait No..... (here put number of portrait) in the current number of SHORT STORIES is mine. Please forward a £5 note.

(Name and full address.)

Persons represented must claim for themselves. Claims made by other people on their behalf will be ignored.

No. 41.

No. 42.

No. 43.

No. 44.

No. 45.

Digitized by Google

MY MILLIONAIRE PATIENT.

Being Extended Extracts from the Note-book of Septimus Ewles, M.D., Late Administrator of Anæsthetics at St. Andrew's Hospital, London.

PRESCRIPTIVE.

It is only after a long self-debate that I have at last decided to give to the world an account of that which has changed for me the whole course of my life, and left me, at an age when most men are revelling in the sunshine of existence, a prey to disappointment—to almost despair.

The man—the being rather, for man, as God makes man, he never could have been—the being, then, who has thus spoilt my life, who has withered for me every blossom I had hoped to rear and cherish through the years, yet lives.

Wishing him, as I do, dead, dead beyond any power to call him back to earth to torture, and to enslave me, I feel, I know that in some one of the world's many corners he still exists to trouble me.

It is nearly two years now since the scenes were played out—of the play of his own making—since he disappeared, but I am convinced, sadly convinced, that in—it may be Pekin, Benares, Kandy, or perhaps even next door to me in this city of London, he is lying low, waiting the supreme moment to crush me for evermore.

But it is not so much for what I myself have suffered, and still continue to suffer, on account of this man's cruel wickedness, that I grieve and revile the fate that originally called me into so wretched and unendurable an existence; it is for Haidée's sake, for the sake of the one woman in all the world for me—whom this monster in human shape has spirited away, where I know not—it is for her sake that I have sworn to find Siever Crafte, to unearth him, if he be alive, and to compel him to do right and justice.

I have been informed by my friend, Detective Inspector Ryan, that on the evening of June 17th, 1899, Crafte left Charing Cross by the boat train; that he was accompanied by a lady—young, dark, tall, and distinguished-looking—and that, so far as can be ascertained, he booked through to Frankfort.

Beyond that nothing has been seen or heard of him since.

Ryan, who has a personal remembrance of Haidée, is of opinion that she and Crafte's lady companion were one and the same. I do not agree with him, insomuch as my love would, I am persuaded, in no wise have submitted to being quietly carried off by one whom, I know, she regarded with the deepest loathing and detestation.

Still, the fact remains that Haidée disappeared the same day, the same hour almost as did Siever Crafte.

At three o'clock on that afternoon a note from her was handed to me at the hospital just as I was about to administer ether in a critical case. Its contents so unnerved me that my junior, Collings, offered to take the case. The note simply said:

"Dear Old Sep.,—Meet me without fail at 6.15 at the 'Cabin,' Piccadilly; usual table. I want to see you awfully! It is really important—to you, as to me. I shall be punctual, and shall look for you to be. I am both ill and sick at heart. "Haidée."

Until the "Cabin" closed for the night I waited, with what patience I might, but Haidée never came.

My one sorrow and soul-trouble now is that on that day she went out of my life; that, in some mysterious, inexplicable way, altogether beyond my power to conceive, Haidée Van Cloo, my affianced wife, vanished suddenly and completely from haunt and home.

From that day to this I have never seen her!

* * * * *

Before I depart on my quest I wish to say that what I have selected from my diary and put into rough narrative form the main events of the terrible three months prior to the disappearance of Siever Crafte and of my beloved Haidée.

This I have placed in the hands of my old friend and ex-colleague at St. Andrews, George Collings, with instructions to him to publish the same if I do not return to reclaim them within six months from the present 13th of January, 1901.

I am told that I am mad to throw up the finest professional position in London in order that I may go—as it is phrased—on a wild goose chase in search of that which, they say, is unfindable.

So be it. I am content to make this sacrifice if by so doing I may but bring myself to know that I have done what I could.

The venture is mine. Success is with Him who alone can give it.

End of Prescriptive.

Note by George Collings, L.R.C.P., lately appointed Administrator of Anæsthetics at St. Andrew's Hospital, London, vice Septimus Ewles, M.D., resigned.

Agreeably with the wish of my friend, Septimus Ewles, I have this day handed the MSS containing the following narrative to "Pearson's, Limited," who have agreed to publish the same, the said Septimus Ewles not having returned to reclaim it within the stipulated period of six months from the 13th of January of this present year.

End of George Collings' Note.

CHAPTER I.

The Almighty Dollar.

"Gentleman to see you, sir."

I glanced at the card Holmes handed to me.

"Siever X. Crafte.
New York City."

"Patient, Holmes?"

"I think so, sir."

"What's the man like?"

I had a strong prejudice against Americans, and Holmes knew it.

"Peculiar-looking, sir, rather. White as a sheet, too, and as thin as an area-railing."

"Look respectable?"

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

"Oh, quite, sir—if you mean money. Should say he had tons of it by the look of him."

"Well, that's no recommendation from my point of view. Millionaires—and I suppose this to be a bloated specimen of the species—millionaires are, as I think, insufferable."

"Yes, sir; and I fancy this particular specimen is all that, and a little more."

"Has he brought any introduction?"

"Yes, sir, but he sticks to it; says he'll hand it you himself."

"There! show him in, Holmes; let me get this trans-Atlantic infliction over."

The individual who, after being announced by Holmes, carefully closed the room-door himself, before my man could do so, was singular—remarkable even, in more ways than one.

Holmes' description of him was wonderfully accurate. Tall, thin, and of feature cadaverous to ghastliness, my visitor from the very first moment I set eyes on him, exercised, in no small degree, a fascination over me, at once powerful and disagreeable.

Indicating a chair, which he took, I opened the letter which he presented me, to find that it was written by a certain American doctor, with whom I had a scientific corresponding acquaintance.

Dr. Garfield was head of the leading hospital in the States, and was the greatest living authority, not only in his own country, but also the civilised world over, upon mania, more especially mania in its homicidal form.

His note to me was to the following effect:

DEAR DR. EWLES,

The bearer of this is Mr. Siever X. Crafte, of New York City, who, as he has informed me, is anxious to consult you with reference to some internal malady.

I do not know much about the man, except that he is too rich by half.

Personally, I cannot say that I like him, in fact, I have my doubts upon some psychological points in connection with him; but there certainly cannot be any harm in your seeing him.

You will quite understand, however, that I hold myself in no way responsible for him, and that you must use you own discretion and judgment in your dealings with him.

Hoping to see you on this side before long,

I am

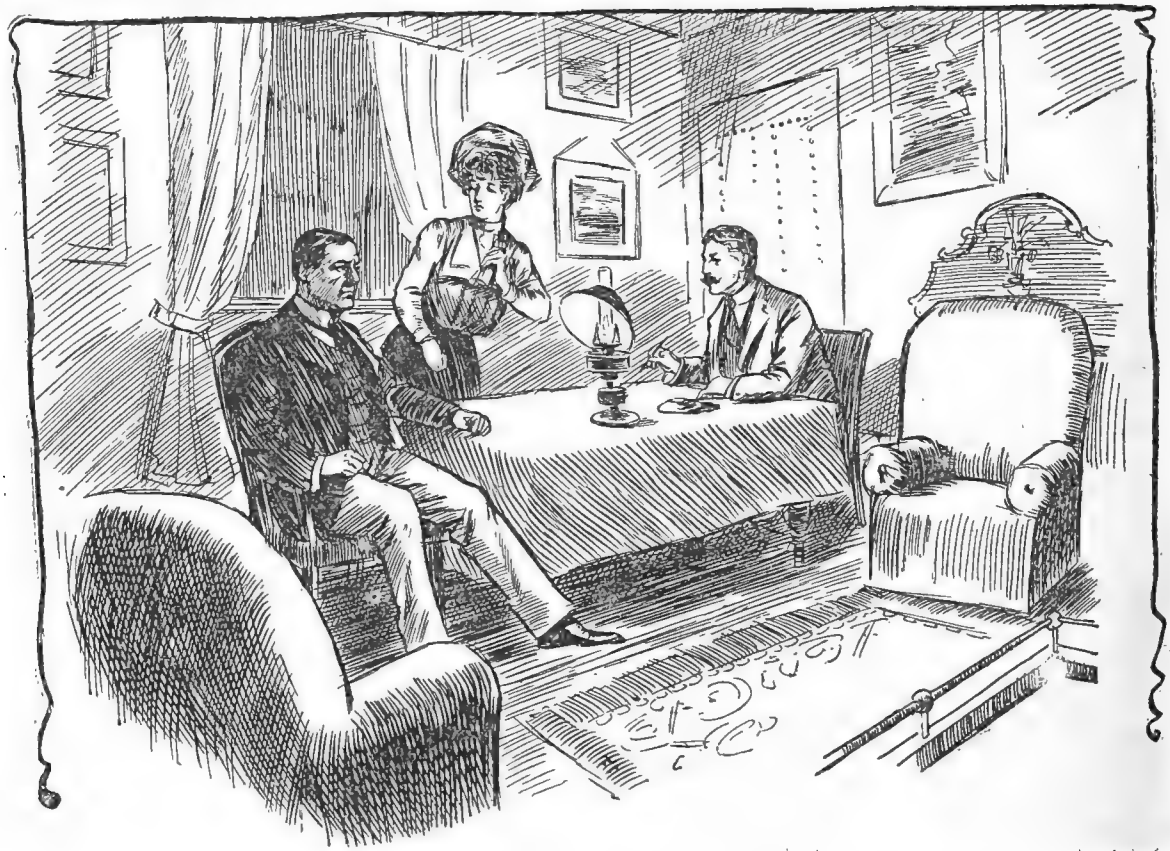
Sincerely yours,

ENSOR P. GARFIELD.

To Dr. Septimus Ewles, M.D.

I looked up after reading the letter, to find Mr. Crafte watching me assiduously.

The man had a peculiar trick of inflating his nostrils every now and again. This, with a strange, and somewhat repulsive shrinking of his scalp, gave him a sinister appearance, by no means pleasant to contemplate.



The next moment the cheque was in her hand.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

"Now, Mr. Crafte," I said, in a business-like tone, "what can I do for you? I must tell you that my time this morning is, in a way, precious, for I have to be at the hospital in less than three-quarters-of-an-hour to administer for a specially important operation."

"Is that so? Well, I don't want much. I can't sleep—just that—can't sleep—that's my trouble. Can't sleep at night, that is. In the day I go off at odd times, but it doesn't do me a bit of good."

"No, I suppose not, it never does. But Dr. Garfield intimates in his letter that it is some internal complaint that you wish my advice about."

"Garfield, like a good many other people, makes occasional mistakes, and that's one of them. Do you think that you can do anything for me?"

"I can't say," I replied, cautiously, "without making a thorough examination; and as I intimated just now, I cannot well spare the time this morning."

"Why not? Never mind the Hospital. Money is no object with me. Only put me on a natural and workable footing again, and you can name your own fee."

"Pardon me, Mr. Crafte, but that is not according to my usual practices; nor is it, if you will allow me to say so, a suggestion such as I am accustomed to have made me. I shall be pleased, of course, to do what I can for you if I am successful—well—you will be satisfied, and I—shall send you in my account in the ordinary way."

Truth to say, I did not care for the fellow's looks. They were positively ghoul-like in their bloodless insistence.

A glance at the clock told me that my time was up, but for the life of me I could not make a move. A curious numbing influence seemed to have me in its grip, rendering me powerless to act upon my own initiative.

"I will call upon you to-night at eleven," calmly and evenly said my unwelcome patient, "if that will suit you."

I was about to say that I never received anyone professionally at that hour; but, somehow, the words froze on my lips. I could only stupidly mutter a few indistinct words, which had no real meaning. "Very well, then," he repeated, "to-night at eleven."

As he rose to leave the room we both heard a voice in the hall—a silvery, ringing voice—asking for me.

Then Holmes entered to say that Haidée—my Haidée—wished to see me.

"Tell my sister," I said, "that Miss Van Cloo is here."

I looked for my American visitor to depart, but Mr. Siever Crafte stood, hat in hand, quite oblivious of the conventionalities, as I interpreted them, and, coolly awaiting developments, as it seemed to me.

Then he said, "Van Cloo! Van Cloo! It would indeed be extraordinary if the young lady should prove to be Miss Haidée Van Cloo."

"The young lady *is* Miss Haidée Van Cloo," I replied, not over courteously, I am afraid.

"Ah, then we are friends," he continued. "That is, I met Miss Haidée in Paris last fall at our ambassador's. The General made us mutually known."

What was it that made me hate this presuming Yankee so? What right had he to talk so familiarly of my little girl?

Another second, and verily, I should have said and done something which I should afterwards have regretted. I was, however, saved in time, though in a way that filled me, upon reflection, with a righteous feeling of uncontrollable jealous anger.

"Sep! just a moment!"

She stood, framed in the doorway, a picture to me of delight.

Siever Crafte smiled, a set, marble-hewed smile, his white face gleaming whiter, in startling contrast to his black clothes.

But it was Haidée's face that told the strangest tale.

Before I could answer her, she had seen and recognised the other.

"Mr. Crafte!" she stammered, and drawing nearer to me. "You here?"

"Yes," he said, with a slight inclination of his head, "and delighted, Miss Van Cloo, to renew our acquaintance."

"Haidée," I then managed to say, "Celia is expecting you upstairs. Mr. Crafte, I shall look for you to-night at eleven."

He took this as a dismissal, and in another moment Haidée and I were free of his presence.

"Sep! This man! What does he do here?"

"He comes as a patient, recommended by my friend Dr. Garfield of Philadelphia."

"Then, have nothing to do with him, Sep—have nothing to do with him!"

"But why, my darling, why?"

"Why!" she almost screamed. "Why; because I know him to have the power to make you—to make me to do his wicked will, whatever it be!"

CHAPTER II.

The Blank Cheque.

With the punctuality of the Evil One (for the devil, they say, is punctual to a fault), my new acquaintance presented himself as the clock struck eleven.

He had evidently been either dining out or amusing himself at the theatre, for he was in evening dress.

I should say here that, late in the afternoon, I had received a supplementary letter by mail from Dr. Garfield.

It was an amplification of the one handed to me by Siever Crafte, but with a pregnant addition, which set me thinking.

"Siever Crafte," it ran, "is a very rich man. Still, no one exactly knows how he acquired his dollars. He follows no kind of business or profession; has never followed any.

"He came, a perfect stranger, to New York, from the west, some ten years ago. He at once proceeded to cut a good figure in Society, spending money freely, right and left. Of course he failed to get within the charmed exclusive circle of the Four Hundred, that was only to be expected, for to succeed in so doing, you must be able to produce and prove your birth-strain, as well as your 'pocket' balance-sheet.

"Siever had no difficulty in giving ample and conclusive evidence of his wealth; but, with regard to his ancestral tree, he couldn't show a leaf or a twig of it.

"I'm rather sorry that I sent him to you, but you can easily drop him, should he prove troublesome.

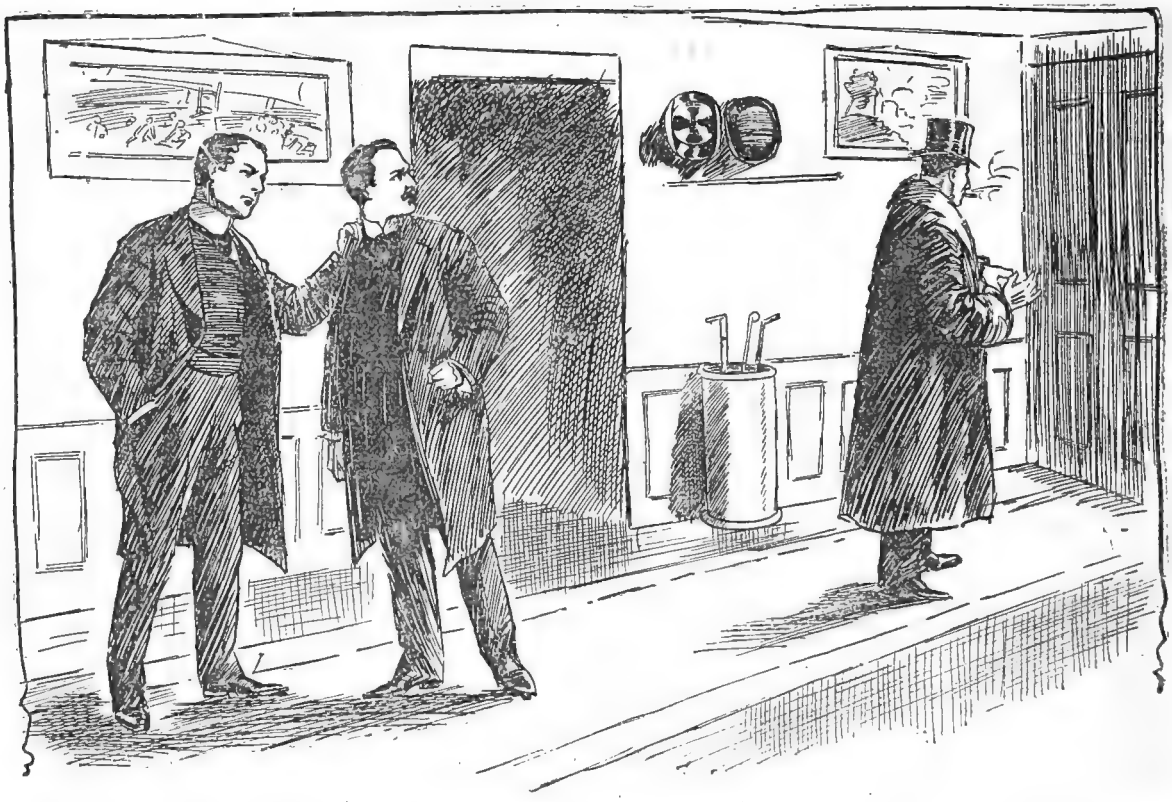
"One thing about him I must caution you against, and that is his undoubted power to over-ride weaker wills than and by his own.

"I am not quite satisfied that he is in the habit of using this power illegitimately, but would not trust him too far in that direction."

So far Dr. Garfield; and, putting it alongside Haidée's extraordinary statement, I was on the alert, as I thought, when my patient put in his late appearance.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google



"But I didn't know that he was a friend of mine."

We had the table between us; the reading-lamp I always use in the evenings being placed so that I was in shadow, while my visitor stood out, silhouette-wise, in the beam of light.

At first he talked of insomnia, in connection, more especially, with himself. Then the conversation insensibly drifted into the subjects of psychic force; hypnotic influence, and so on.

Once or twice I caught myself looking fixedly at him, he, the while, gazing steadily into my eyes.

Then I remembered the warning I had but now received, and by a great effort of will, wrenched my attention away from him.

This, as I have said, happened more than once; each time I succeeded in switching myself, as it were, from off him, he manifesting an impatience, not to say irritability of demeanour, not in any way warranted by the subject-matter of our talk.

"Dr. Ewles," he said at length—and I noticed that it was close upon midnight—"what would you do with a million dollars—two hundred thousand pounds sterling—if you had it?"

He shot the question at me so unexpectedly, that, for the moment, I could not answer him.

I needed all my nerve now, for I felt myself unconsciously surrendering myself to a will-influence, greater than my own, and which I was becoming less and less able to resist.

I could not take my eyes from those other eyes which glowed like coals of fire from out that corpse-like mask.

"A million dollars!" he went on. "Just imagine what it is capable of purchasing. Fifty times that amount have I, and yet, I cannot sleep—cannot even enjoy life as can, and does a wretched clerk or salesman upon his miserable pittance of ten dollars or less a week.

"Perhaps had you a million, to do with as you listed, you could tell me something which would open my eyes."

As he spoke he drew from the breast pocket of his coat a folded piece of bluish grey paper.

This he deliberately spread out before him on the table, smoothing it, as if it were of inestimable value.

It was a blank cheque on the Burlington Street Branch of the Bank of England.

Suddenly, I experienced that whatever will-power I possessed, had passed temporarily away from me, and that I was responding to the stronger thought—touch of an influence I could not fight against.

"You see this cheque?"

"Yes."

"Well, you will fill it up for the sum of two hundred thousand pounds."

Mechanically, I reached my arm across the table, and drew towards me the oblong piece of bluish-grey paper.

Pen and ink were on the table.

"Fill up," said Crafte again, "for two hundred thousand pounds."

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

I did so, and the cheque lay before me, made out to my order, and crossed "London and County," my own bankers.

It has always been a mystery to me what the object of this man could have been in thus hypnotically compelling me to do that which he could just as well have done himself; and also, why he should have desired to give me, (if he did really so desire) the benefit of so vast a sum of money.

I say give, for I should never have cashed that cheque. I should have imagined that every coin of it was white-hot with a heat infernal.

But there was another who, like-minded with myself, would none of that, the mere touch of which we both instinctively held to be pollution.

Haidée had remained with my sister since the morning, having agreed to stay, as she often did, for a couple of days.

That she did so now, was a wonderful link in the chain of current events.

Hearing no sound from the drawing-room above, I had concluded that the two girls had retired long before.

It was while I was in a maundering semi-stupid fashion studying the precious slip of paper lying in front of me—a slip of paper which contained in itself possibilities far above the most exaggerated dreams of the average man, that the slight crack of the room door, half-woke me to returning consciousness.

Crafte's back was towards the door, but I, who faced it, could, brain-dulled though I was, distinctly see the form of Haidée pass into the room; sweep swiftly across the beam of light coming from the reading-lamp, and move in my direction.

The next moment the cheque, snatched with lightning quickness from off the table, was in her hand.

Crafte had sprung lightly to his feet.

"Miss Van Cloo!" he said, "this is a little extraordinary isn't it?"

Haidée, one hand upon my shoulder (I was still sitting, in a dull, dazed sort of a way, my limbs, when I tried to rise, seeming heavy as lead), the other having the cheque crumpled up within it, answered him not a word. Her eyes were, unusually for her, ablaze with contemptuous wrath.

Then she spoke to him.

"Mr. Crafte," she said, "Dr. Ewles does not require your money, for which—if I know you at all—(and you well know that I do) you will assuredly exact a terrible consideration."

"Doctor! this young lady is mad!"

"Sep, dear, do not heed him! I know what I do! See here!" and the intrepid girl lifting defiantly a spirit cigar-lighter, touched with it a corner of the cheque, which, in a flash, lay a little heap of grey ash on the table-cloth.

Crafte now looked me steadily for a second between the eyes, and I felt a rapid return of mental and physical vigour. I had come to my right mind.

The whole scene, as I have described it, is indelibly impressed on my memory. I can see it as plainly to-day as I could then.

The American said no more, but demanding of Holmes, who stood in the doorway, summoned by my ring, his hat and overcoat, left the house.

The reaction upon my darling took the form of violent hysterical sobbing.

"Sep!" she at last said, "you don't know from what I have saved you!—you don't know!"

CHAPTER III.

The Satanic Shadow.

From that night onward, until his disappearance three months after his first visit to me, this mysterious man of millions, this incarnation of mad malignity, haunted me beyond endurance.

True, he never again entered my house—did not even call there: but he nevertheless made his baleful presence felt in such subtle, secret ways that I knew no rest, no peace.

My colleagues at the hospital, more especially my great chum Collings, came at last to notice that I was, physically and mentally, falling to pieces.

When administering chloroform or ether my hand would tremble, and my whole body would be damp with a nervous sweat, which threatened near-at-hand weakness, and probable total collapse.

"My dear fellow," Collings said one day. "You can't go on like this. You won't tell us what is the matter. Come! what is it? We would any of us stick at nothing to put you right."

"I know that, George," I answered him, "but neither you, nor anyone can straighten this matter out for me."

I had another trouble, too. Haidée seemed different. Not exactly altered, but—different.

I saw but little of her during this trying time.

She shut herself up in her studio out Kensington way, and not even my sister Celia, her old schoolmate, could penetrate her seclusion.

I was tortured to know what it all could mean.

As for Siever Crafte, he was always with me. His bloodless, cruel face met me wherever I went.

One day I saw him deep in chat with the physician-in-chief at St. Andrew's. I was passing through the main lobby at the time.

"Ah, Ewles!" said the big man shortly afterwards, "that is a most remarkable man, that friend of yours—Crafte, I think his name is. Most remarkable man! He speaks most warmly of you, too!"

"Does he?" I replied wearily. "But I didn't know that he was a friend of mine. I've only seen him twice to speak to. He came to me with an introduction from Garfield, of Philadelphia, the 'mania' man, you know."

"Dear me! Well, I thought you and he were quite intimate, from what he said. I've promised to take him round to-morrow, and explain things here a bit to him."

I came across him once or twice in this way at St. Andrew's, but neither of us spoke.

At parties, meetings, gatherings of all kinds, alike social and public, I met him, and whether or not I was mistaken I cannot say, but I always fancied that people after he had gone, looked askance at me.

Gradually I was conscious that friends and acquaintances became cold and distant; that the world—my world—was not as it had been towards me; was, in fact, dropping away from me.

I must ever except Collings from this list of the disaffected. He, dear old fellow, was always loyal and true.

How I became firmly and absolutely convinced that Siever Crafte was the moving spirit in all this shall now be told.

Sleeplessness at night had now seized upon me for a

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

victim. Throughout the long hours I tossed and turned until my brain reeled again.

Tortured beyond degree one night I put on my hat and sallied out into the street. It was a fine night; the sky was studded with stars, but there was no moon. I wandered on and on, until I reached the bit of embankment by Westminster Bridge.

As is well known, just opposite the St. Stephen's Club entrance, on the other side of the road, the pavement for a short distance has two levels, one going parallel with the Embankment roadway, the other sinking a few feet as an approach to the steamboat pier.

I had crossed over from the club corner, and, leaning my arms on the upper parapet, looked down to the lower level. I had heard voices issuing up from there, and perhaps this had something to do with my action.

"I have hitherto failed completely," said a voice I rapidly recognised as that of Siever Crafte, "in getting this doctor-fool entangled in my enterprise; but I think I have got a bit even with him. The few hints I have dropped here and there have done their work. This Anglo-Dutch girl, however, it is who is the great spoke in my wheel. She knows too much. When in Paris last year I became foolish over her, and showed my hand. She is clever enough, too, to know her power, and to use it when she gets the opportunity."

"I should not have given you credit for such soft giving of yourself away," said a deep bass voice in reply.

"Well, we are all foolish sometimes. Unfortunately, this little lapse of mine, from the line of common sense, may have disastrous consequences."

"Not if you, or rather we, succeed in carrying out your idea to-morrow. It is the only way out of the difficulty, and if a hitch occurs I can see nothing but ruin for you."

"There must be no hitch. If you do as I have instructed you the young lady will be silenced, our medical friend reckoned with, and yours truly safely on the way to fresh fields and new pastures."

The voices ceased. My first intention was to descend the steps on the left and confront the plotters; but I quite forgot that steps on the right provided another exit from the lower level. By the time I reached the spot where the two had stood there was no one there.

I rushed up the right-hand steps just in time to see two men enter a hansom on the clock-tower side of the bridge, and drive off rapidly westward.

It was hopeless to track them. The next best thing was to find Ryan, my detective friend, but he was absent, I found on inquiry, on professional business no one knew where.

I decided, therefore, to wait till the next day, when he would probably be free to help me. But here again I was doomed to disappointment. Ryan's man-hunt took him to New York, and before I could see him he had left town for Liverpool.

Then came the little note from Haidée to me at the hospital, the subsequent fruitless waiting for her at the "Cabin," and my own determination to-day, two years nearly, after the flight of Crafte and the disappearance of my love, to seek these two if I have to go to the uttermost parts of the earth to do so.

No one will hear of me until I tread once more on English ground; then, and not till then, will I open my lips to tell of those things which I now go to encounter. I take up the trail at Frankfort. RALPH ENDERBY.

(The sequel to this strange story will appear shortly.)

Pearson's Xmas Number

IS NOW ON SALE. IT CONTAINS

He Loves Me! He Loves Me Not! A full-page plate by ABBEY ALTSON—a blaze of colour.

A Few Matrimonial Don'ts. By MAX O'RELL—nice easy reading.

It's an Ill Wind that Blows Nobodie Good. A full-page plate, by HAL HURST—a blaze of colour.

The Man with the God-Like Eye Short Story, by J. R. CREED—nice easy reading.

The Dear Little Pussy Cat that did not Know when to Leave Off. —In thirteen pictures, all coloured.

The Princess and the Pink Diamonds. A Short Story, by HUAN MEE—nice easy reading and six pictures; a blaze of colour.

Invited to Dinner —A tale told in eighteen telegrams and other pictures, all coloured.

Otoyo.—The little Japanese girl who was kissed, who got married, and who, we hope, lived happily ever afterwards—nice easy reading and pictured in a blaze of colour—a gem of art and literature.

A Feline Felon.—The story of a naughty tom cat, in thirteen verses and five pictures—all coloured.

The Sad Case of Parson Strong.—Told very quaintly in many verses by FLETCHER ROBINSON—nice easy reading and pictured by W. OWEN, all in a blaze of colour.

Shot.—By CUTCLIFFE HYNE, author of Captain Kettle—nice easy reading.

The Musical Crocodile: and how he played the Harp.—Amusingly pictured by FRANK HOLLAND in nine coloured illustrations.

Forget-me-not—A full-page plate in a blaze of colour.

One hundred other pictures all in a blaze of colour, and many clever stories, altogether the most superb Xmas number ever issued. A budget of fun.

PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NO., NOW READY,

Is new in every sense of the word. New in shape—for Pearson's—

PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NO., NOW READY.

New in its reading, new in its illustrations.

PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NO., NOW READY.

Even the extra coloured plate is a new idea. We searched the country for twelve of the prettiest babies that could be found. Here you get them in all the colours of the rainbow in a panel plate A YARD LONG—in short,

A YARD OF BABIES.

SOMETHING NEW—In Christmas Numbers, in Illustrations, in Reading, in Plates.

Pearson's Christmas Number

(which is the Extra Christmas Number of all the Pearson Publications) cannot be reprinted, nor can this lovely plate.

IT IS NOW SELLING.

In a few days there may be no copies left.

We believe we could have sold twice as many as we have printed.

That is our loss.

It will be your loss if you do not

GET A COPY NOW. ONE SHILLING.

In a few days it may be selling at double or treble this figure.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

The Widow's Choice.

HAROLD SIMPSON and Archibald Capper had been friends for years. They both lived in the same boarding-house at Bayswater, and they travelled to the City every morning together by 'bus or tube according to the weather. Both were bank-clerks in different banks, and both were bachelors.

Whether it was the pernicious influence of the money which each in the course of his business had daily to see and to handle, is not certain. But what is certain is, that each, having attained something like the age of fifty, was imbued with a particularly strong characteristic, which characteristic has been aptly summed up in the phrase—"an eye to the main chance."

No mistake about it, both Mr. Simpson and Mr. Capper had eyes of that kind. But it didn't affect their friendship one whit. On the contrary, it seemed to draw them closer together. Thus it happened that they belonged to the same "Social Club," had the same circle of acquaintances, and, on every hand were looked upon as inseparable friends.

This friendship, fostered by long acquaintance with each other's likes and dislikes, might have remained for ever, had not the inevitable woman come between them.

She came in the form of a widow—fair, forty, but *not* fat. Quite a slim thing, indeed, with a face that might have belonged to a woman ten years her junior. Charming in manner she was, as well as in features. Her eyes were perfect—the kind that draw men to them whether they will or not; and Mrs. Peterson—that was the widow's name—knew how to use them. In addition, it speedily became known that she had money, and a good deal of it.

In a week from her arrival, every man Jack in the Belle Vue Boarding House was, figuratively speaking, on his knees to her.

Not even excepting those two confirmed bachelors, Simpson and Capper. They, indeed, were amongst her most ardent admirers, though a peculiar kind of shyness kept them from betraying that fact to other people. Even from one another they, for a time, concealed the state of their feelings.

But being so much together it was obviously impossible for them to do so for long. It was, therefore, not very surprising when, late one evening, after the remainder of the boarders had retired to rest, Simpson should remark to Capper:

"Charming woman!"

"You mean Mrs. Peterson? Yes, very charming."

Both were silent for a moment, puffing reflectively at their pipes. Simpson wondered vaguely why Capper should have known to whom he referred; Capper, equally vague, tried to imagine why Simpson had made his statement without connecting it with a name.

Simpson broke the silence.

"The sort of woman one would like to settle down with for life."

"Yes, if one were of the marrying sort."

"Of course," said Simpson.

"Quite so," added Capper.

They lapsed into silence again.

"We are getting on in life, and are confirmed bachelors, it's strange, isn't it?" Simpson asked, blowing out a cloud of smoke.

"Very strange," replied Capper laconically, blowing out another cloud.

"Do you know, Capper, I sometimes feel as if—as if——"

"So do I, Simpson—so do I!"

"A home of one's own, with the woman of one's heart, you know, Capper——"

"I know, Simpson—I know!"

They were silent once again. Only the pop of their lips around their pipe-stems broke the silence. At length Simpson murmured:

"Charming woman!"

"Very charming woman!"

"Do you know I admire her immensely?"

"So do I!"

Simpson half dropped a suspicious eye on Capper.

"Sometimes," he pursued musingly, "I think that she—in a way—you know the way women have—admires me. Curious creatures, women!"

"Very!" returned Capper drily.

The whole of Simpson's suspicious eye dropped on Capper now. But he removed it at once, and went on:

"Capper, I have known you a good many years, and you and I have been intimate friends. Capper, I want to tell you a secret!"

Capper rose from his chair slowly, and looked Simpson full in the face.

"Simpson," he said, and upon his face was an unusual pallor, "I too, have a secret to tell *you!*"

Simpson rose now. The two bachelors faced one another. Simpson spoke.

"Capper, I am in love!"

"Simpson, I also am in love."

"Capper, I adore Mrs. Peterson."

"Simpson, I worship the ground she walks on."

"As I before said," Simpson remarked, "I have grounds for believing she reciprocates my affection."

"She said she had never enjoyed music so much in her life as when I sang 'Come into the Garden, Maud,'" retorted Capper.

"She has done all that a modest woman can do to show she cares for me," rejoined Simpson hotly.

"She told me she liked my conversation," Capper said, keen on keeping his end up.

"Oh, that's a mere triviality," Simpson chipped in, triumphantly. "She told me I reminded her of her late husband!"

"Not much of a recommendation to a widow, is it?" asked Capper cynically.

Again there was a silence, both men fuming and glaring at one another.

Gradually both their tempers cooled a little. They sat down, still maintaining the most dogged silence, deep in thought.

At length Simpson spoke.

"Capper!"

"Simpson!"

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

Both looked up, and their eyes met.

"Capper," said Simpson brokenly; "it's the first quarrel. I think, that we've ever had?"

"Simpson," returned Capper, snuffling a little; "it is."

"Capper, a dramatic moment in our lives has arrived. We are in love!"

"Deeply!"

"As you say, deeply. That would not matter, but the trouble is, we are both in love with the same woman."

"The same *angel*," murmured Capper.

"Capper, I thank you for the correction. It is perfectly justifiable. We have both fallen in love with the same *angel*; we both worship at the same shrine—the feet of Mrs. Peterson! Capper, can you deny it?"

"Simpson, I cannot!"

"Ah! then may I assume that, like myself, you have so far worshipped in silence?"

"You may."

"Good! Then Capper, I have a plan to propose. We are old friends, and it is at such moments as these that we need to stand together. You will listen to my plan, Capper?"

"Simpson, I will."

"It is this, that neither of us shall propose to her whom we mutually regard as an angel, for the space of one month."

"And what then?"

"After that time we each write a letter offering her our hands and hearts, and post them at precisely the same moment. Then we abide by her decision. Do you agree, Capper?"

"Simpson," returned Capper emotionally, "you have spoken as a gentleman and a friend. Your plan is fairness itself. I agree to it."

"I am glad," returned the other, "because it is fair to Mrs. Peterson as well. She is evidently well disposed towards us both, and a verbal proposal from either of us would probably lead to her accepting whichever of us uttered it. By sending letters simultaneously, it will give neither of us an advantage over the other, and Mrs. Peterson will be left to choose between us. And by her decision, Capper, we will faithfully, if sadly, abide, eh?"

"Simpson, you have expressed the case exactly. If you are the lucky man, I will wish you joy with all my heart."

"And I you!" returned Simpson fervently.

* * * * *

Very conceited were these two old bachelors. Each thought his own chances of gaining the widow's affections were certain.

And here, let it be said, that their intended proposals were by no means of a disinterested kind. Though they never for a moment allowed one another to think it, it is probable that the widow's good looks alone would never have attracted them. It was the fact that she possessed a goodly balance at the bank that interested them; for has it not been said that both Simpson and Capper had an eye to the main chance?

The first week of the intervening month passed quietly enough. The elderly rivals, without breaking their contract, each paid the widow marked attention at every opportunity. Simpson seemed to come in for his share of encouragement, and was once more told of his resemblance to the late Mr. Peterson. Capper, on his side, was made happy by the praises which the widow bestowed on his singing and upon his conversation.

All went merry as the much-quoted marriage-bell, to which, indeed, both rivals felt certain all these things were preliminary.

But then came a startling announcement. It became known one day that Mrs. Peterson was about to leave the Belle Vue boarding house. She was taking a house of her own in Shepherd's Bush.

To Simpson and Capper the news came like a thunderbolt. Unless they spoke to the widow, here was an end to all their fondest plans. So, at any rate, it seemed at first.

But not for long. For that same night Simpson managed to get Mrs. Peterson on one side, and had such a *tete-a-tete* with her as revived his hopes to a point of "moral certainty."

The widow seemed tenderer than ever when replying to his reference to her impending departure.

"Oh, but surely, Mr. Simpson," she said, "because I am leaving here, that is no reason why we should end our friendship?"

The look she gave him made Simpson utter a most devout:

"I'm sure, my dear Mrs. Peterson, I sincerely hope not!"

"On the contrary," pursued the widow, "I trust that you will honour my house with your company very often." Then, after a pause, during which she cast upon Simpson a look of something with a smile in it, she added: "With you by my side, Mr. Simpson, I could almost imagine my poor dear husband had come back to life! You are so like him, you don't know!"

Simpson would have spoken there and then; would have carefully dropped upon one knee and have poured out from his fifty-year old heart all the love that was pent up in his breast. But he didn't. He remembered his compact with Capper. He must wait till the month was up.

Lest it should be too soon taken for granted that Simpson was the object of the widow's affection, let her talk with Capper that very same evening be recounted.

"I'm sorry you're going," Capper remarked simply. "Very sorry. I shall miss you awfully."

Mrs. Peterson cast upon him a look of something like reproach.

"But surely," she said, "you are not going to let a difference of domicile keep us apart? I am looking forward to the time when I shall be charmed in my own drawing-room by that voice which you know so well how to use."

Capper's heart bounded within him. He, too, felt tempted to prostrate himself at her feet and to signify his willingness to go on singing "Come into the Garden, Maud" for ever. But he, too, remembered his promise, and he, too, held his peace.

Both Simpson and Capper were secretly delighted. Each afterwards separately recalled the details of their respective interviews, just narrated, and each thought that he was preferred above the other by the fair widow. But neither communicated to the other these ideas at first. That they experienced them was, however, abundantly evidenced by their demeanour of suppressed jubilation, whenever they discussed the question of their declaration of love.

The time for this declaration was now rapidly approaching.

"Capper," said Simpson a week or so after the departure of Mrs. Peterson for her new home. "Wednesday next will decide our fate! On that day the month is up, and

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

we dispatch our missives to the object of our affections."

"We do, Simpson," returned Capper.

"Capper," pursued Simpson, "we are old friends; we came to an agreement regarding this matter that afforded us the utmost satisfaction. We agreed to abide by her decision and, whatever it might be, to bear no animosity against one another, but simply to wish each other joy?"

To which the laconic Capper returned:

"Simpson, we did."

"That being so," said Simpson, "I feel it my duty, Capper—as an old friend, you know—to let you down lightly."

"What do you mean, Simpson?" asked Capper, looking up anxiously.

"I mean, Capper, that you ought to be prepared for a disappointment. I have reasons to believe that Mrs. Peterson will accept me." And Simpson smiled confidently as he remembered his last talk with the widow.

"Simpson!" returned Capper, and there was a tinge of triumph in his manner as he, too, recalled the details of his conversation just prior to her departure. "Simpson, you are sanguine, which is a pity. Had you not broached this part of the subject, I should not have mentioned it—out of respect for your feelings. But since you have raised the point, I feel bound to tell you that I don't think you stand the remotest chance. Mrs. Peterson undoubtedly prefers me."

"Pah!" exploded Simpson.

"Pooh-pooh!" retorted Capper.

And then the two, each confident of his own chances, started saying extremely rude things in a nice way to one another, till it was time to retire for the night.

* * * * *

The eventful Wednesday evening arrived. The two old bachelors met in the smoking-room after dinner. For a few minutes they were silent. Simpson shot a furtive glance at Capper. Capper shot a similar missile at Simpson. Then Simpson said:

"Capper, the time has come!" and sighed.

"Simpson, it has!" and Capper sighed too.

"Capper, I am going to my room to write my letter."

"Simpson, so am I."

"We will meet here again in half-an-hour."

"Certainly."

They bowed in silence to one another, and each retired to his room, ostensibly to write out his proposal of marriage to Mrs. Peterson. As a matter-of-fact, each had his letter already written, having devoted the best part of the last fortnight to its composition. But they had told one another no word of this.

For the hundredth time, Simpson, in the privacy of his own room, perused his epistle.

As he finished the eloquent outpourings of his soul, he sealed the letter with a sigh of satisfaction.

"She can never resist me," he said to himself. "Capper has no chance."

Capper, in the privacy of his room, read his letter, too. In his eye there was a look of triumph.

"This letter," he mused, "would win any woman! Simpson, you will soon hear of me as Mrs. Peterson's second husband!"

He sealed his letter and descended to the smoke-room.

"Finished?" queried Simpson, who was already there.

"Finished!" returned Capper. "I propose that we go and post them."

Arm in arm and rather slowly, they sauntered down the street to the pillar-box. Then each, with an outstretched hand, dropped his letter in.

"To-morrow!" observed Simpson solemnly, "our fate will be decided."

And Capper assented.

They were back at the boarding-house ten minutes later. On the hall slab, as they entered, were two letters—one for each of them.

Both hearts beat with pleasure as they eagerly scanned the handwriting, but both delayed opening their missive till they reached the privacy of the smoking-room.

"This is from Mrs. Peterson," remarked Simpson, with subdued triumph.

"So is this!" returned Capper, flourishing his letter.

Then as they broke the seal, both were silent.

"She invites me to dinner next Tuesday!" cried Simpson, ecstatically, reading.

"So she does me!" Capper returned.

"There's a postscript to mine," Simpson went on. "—sh, what's this? O—h—h!" Simpson suddenly went pale and plumped into a seat.

At the same moment Capper did precisely the same thing.

Both letters fluttered to the ground. This is how they read, with the necessary alteration of name:

"Dear Mr. Simpson,—Will you do me the honour of dining here on Tuesday next at seven o'clock? I am so longing to renew our pleasant friendship. Yours sincerely—ISABEL PETERSON.

"P.S.—I hope to introduce you to Major Pombridge, to whom, you will be pleased to hear, I am to be married shortly."

"Capper," said Simpson in a broken voice, after a brief pause, "we have made asses of ourselves!"

"Simpson," replied Capper in tremulous tones, "we have!"

"She is a flirt!" said Simpson.

"She has trifled with my affections!" returned Capper. "We can't go to the dinner, of course?"

"Of course not, now we've sent those letters."

"I don't think I cared for her much," said Simpson, in a "sour grapes" kind of way.

"I'm beginning to think it was a mere passing fancy on my part," Capper returned.

And then the two baffled old bachelors lapsed into silence, and smoked and pondered on what might have been.

G. CARR.

LADIES

May enter the big Football Competition now running in "Pearson's Weekly," with every chance of success. They need know nothing about the game. A charming £6 6s. costume is offered as a special prize.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

DEAD TO THE WORLD

By Henry T. Johnson.

Author of "Cruce Vincit," "The Pride of the Ring," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

RICHARD SELDON (Tiger Dick), an escaped convict who murders and then impersonates Cyril Roylance.
HARCOURT DALE, a near neighbour of Roylance.
DORIS DALE, his daughter.
JACK BRANSCOMBE, a young farmer, in love with Doris.
BARKER, the Dale's butler, who was murdered by Seldon and two accomplices.
INSPECTOR ROSSITER, a detective from Scotland Yard.

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST CHAPTERS.

RICHARD SELDON, a convict, escapes. In a train he meets Cyril Roylance just back from Australia, whom he murders and impersonates. He assumes the rôle of squire, and pays attention to Doris Dale.

While visiting the Dales, the butler is murdered by Seldon and two accomplices, but he so manages that the guilt is fixed on Jack Branscombe, Doris' lover. Branscombe is away from home when the verdict against himself is pronounced.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FRATERNAL NUBBLEYS.

IN the boughs that shaded the village school, and in the ivy that clothed it like a mantle, the birds were singing, making gentle music to the children's morning hymn, and the morning sunshine was drying the tear drops that the dew had left on the now smiling faces of the flowers. The flowers were pleasant to look upon, and the harmony made by the song birds and the children was pleasant to listen to.

That was why the two old gentlemen who had taken the quaint old cottage contiguous to the school house were sitting out in the old-fashioned garden in the sunshine. They were two nice old gentlemen, not long ago they had been looked upon as two strange old gentlemen, and about nine days ago the Fallowfield villagers had greatly wondered about them, and why they had chosen Fallowfield wherein to sojourn. But the nine days' wonder had worn itself out, and the two strange old gentlemen had become accepted facts—facts all the more gratefully accepted because they were evidently pretty well-to-do old gentlemen, and liberal to boot.

Not that they were exactly refined, in fact, both in manner and speech they were somewhat rough and ready, but Fallowfield tolerated the rough in consideration of the ready, for, whatever their bounds, socially, educationally, or otherwise, their means appeared to be unlimited, the source thereof being generally reputed to be the colossal sum awarded by a certain railway company for compensation in respect of the injuries sustained in an accident on their line by the old gentleman who, at the moment in question, was being wheeled along the cottage garden by the other old gentleman, which injuries, combined with rheumatism, necessitated that wheeling. Everybody said how good and kind it was of the other old gentleman to wheel his brother about in that bath-chair, how tender-hearted he must be, and grown-up people pointed out the two old gentlemen to little boys who were quarrelling as examples of what brothers ought to be. "Mr. Nubbley never picks up bricks to throw at his brother," they said, "he wheels him about in the sunshine in a bath-chair because he likes to listen to the beautiful birds and look at the beautiful flowers." For it should be mentioned that the brothers were known in Fallowfield as James Nubbley and Joseph Nubbley.

"Yes," said Mr. James Nubbley, "brother Joseph is partial to what he calls the beauties of nature, and seeing as 'ow he can't take his walks abroad to enjoy 'em, in course it's my bounden duty to wheel him amongst 'em, and begging pardon, was it the burglary over at Dalehurst Grange as you was talkin' about?"

"No, Mr. Nubbley," replied one of the villagers, volubly and excitedly, "it's nearer home this time. The gang, for gang of 'em there must be, have broken into Brettelby Court."

"And where may that be?"

"Why, about two and a half miles along the Fallowfield road. Our Squire was dining there last night, and on their way back from Brettelby, no doubt it was the

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

same lot, they broke into Fallowfield Hall, and no doubt meant to murder the Squire. As it was, they half-killed poor Mr. Chandler."

"Deary me!" ejaculated the man in the invalid chair. "Brother James, whatever is the world a-comin' to with such a lot of wicked people in it? Have they got any clue?"

"Nary bit o' one," was the answer. "That detective chap from London, he's up there making inquiries and takin' instructions from the Squire; but lor! it seems to me these London police are all very well for dealing with swell mobsmen, but our own constabulary's best to deal with a desperate lot like there is hiding round this countryside. What do you say, Mr. Bingle?"

This last question was addressed to, just as the remark prefacing it was made in deference to a burly individual of severe and self-conscious demeanour, who, halting, returned the respectful salutation of the company with a very proper condescension. And this individual, after the question had been duly deferentially repeated, replied.

"What I thinks is this, Bob Challoner, I thinks, other people thinks what they likes and I also has my opinions," and the group exchanged glances, as who should say: "There's a deep one for you; ah! he could tell us something if he only liked to open his mouth."

The brothers Nubbley meantime interchanged glances, and the one in the wheel chair inquired, after a pause:

"And did they get any stuff; I mean, any plate or money away from the Hall?"

"Not a scrap seemingly," said Bob Challoner, the village gossip; "d.d they, Mr. Bingle?"

"Now, look here, Bob," said that ornament to the county constabulary, pointing a warning finger, "you know as I'm in a responsible position, and don't you go asking me a lot of unresponsible questions; and, likewise and also, Bob Challoner, you just be careful what you're a-talking about, 'cause in times like these people in unresponsible positions has got to be careful about going about saying unresponsible things."

Mr. Challoner, duly crushed, subsided with becoming humility, and very properly and respectfully begged Mr. Bingle's pardon, and expressed a hope that he hadn't said anything that he oughtn't to have said, but that if he had he humbly apologised and likewise bowed, whereupon Mr. Bingle intimated loftily that there was no harm done for the matter of that, but that, mysteriously, people ought to mind what they said about matters they didn't understand. The brothers Nubbley nodded approval, and when Mr. Challoner had in some confusion shuffled awkwardly away followed by his companions in the direction of the Roylance Arms, Mr. James Nubbley remarked, sagely:

"As you say, Mr Bingle, sir, parties in your responsible position has to be very careful what they says."

"They has, Mr. Nubbley."

"And what they listens to."

"You're right, sir; you're a man of the world, Mr. Nubbley."

"There's a bit of a nip in the air this morning, don't you think, Mr. Bingle, sir?"

"I was noticing it comin' down the road, Mr. Nubbley."

"Was you now, really? What a coincidence! My brother Joseph was just asking me if I'd step inside and bring out the bottle of 'square face' just to keep that cold snap away from inside the chest, Mr. Bingle."

"And he's a werry good judge, Mr. Nubbley. Ah, you has to be very careful, Mr. Joseph, setting still, as you unfortunately has to, to take a little nip of something now and then to keep the circulation going. And a great consolation it must be, sir, for you to 'ave a brother like Mr. James, a-studyin' your every want."

"It is, Mr. Bingle, and I'm grateful accordin'. James is werry thoughtful, and he knows my ways; knows how I likes to see the flowers a-growing in the garden and along the roadside, and the lambs a-friskin' in the fields. Why, if my brother James was to see a lamb a-friskin', he'd hurry home as fast as he could pelt to take me out in this old bath-chair afore it had done friskin' Here he comes with my drop of 'square face.'"

"Yes, here he comes, what an active man he is!" said Mr. Bingle, and then with an air of the most intense surprise as a dwarf tumbler was placed in his hand: "Why, Mr. Nubbley, sir, what's this for? You've brought three glasses!"

"Which I have," replied brother James, "in the 'opes as you'll do us the honour of joining us in a nip." Then, filling the glasses, he continued: "Mr. Bingle, sir, my respects; brother Joseph, here's my regards." Then, smacking his lips, after emptying his glass, he observed blandly: "How sweet it is to hear the little children a-singing of their little songs!"

"It is," assented Constable Bingle, "and that's a drop of real Hollands, Mr. Nubbley," and he produced from his tunic pocket a well-seasoned briarwood pipe.

"Do me the honour of trying a pipeful of mine," said Mr. James Nubbley, taking up the tobacco canister and a couple of churchwardens from beside the bath-chair and filling them. The three filled their pipes, Mr. James re-filled their glasses, the three emptied these, and the ponderous importance and severity of the representative of the strong arm of the Law palpably relaxed.

"It's a very rum start," Mr. James hazarded, "this job up here," and the stem of his churchwarden described a semi-circle with a mile or so of woodland, pasture, and arable between the spot and Fallowfield Hall.

"You're right, it is," said Mr. Bingle mysteriously.

"These London chaps seem to be a little bit off the line, eh?" said Mr. James with a significant nod, and Mr. Joseph from the wheel chair, pointing his churchwarden impressively, said:

"Now, brother James, you know what Mr. Bingle said just now about his responsible position and irresponsible folks asking irresponsible questions. You look after Mr. Bingle's glass and leave such serious matters as his business alone. He knows what he knows, you let him alone for that."

"Oh, that's all right, Mr. Joseph," replied P.c. Bingle. "There's no harm in Mr. James making a remark. In course, I am a responsible party, so to speak, but I draws a distinction between intelligent gentlemen like you.—(Thank you, Mr. James; my! this does warm the chest and werry good likewise for the infernal—I mean internal organs)—and the likes of that there fellow Challoner. And you ain't far wrong, Mr. James. These 'ere parties down from London who, with all their swagger and any amount of money at their command, don't seem such flyers at the game when it comes to settling down to work."

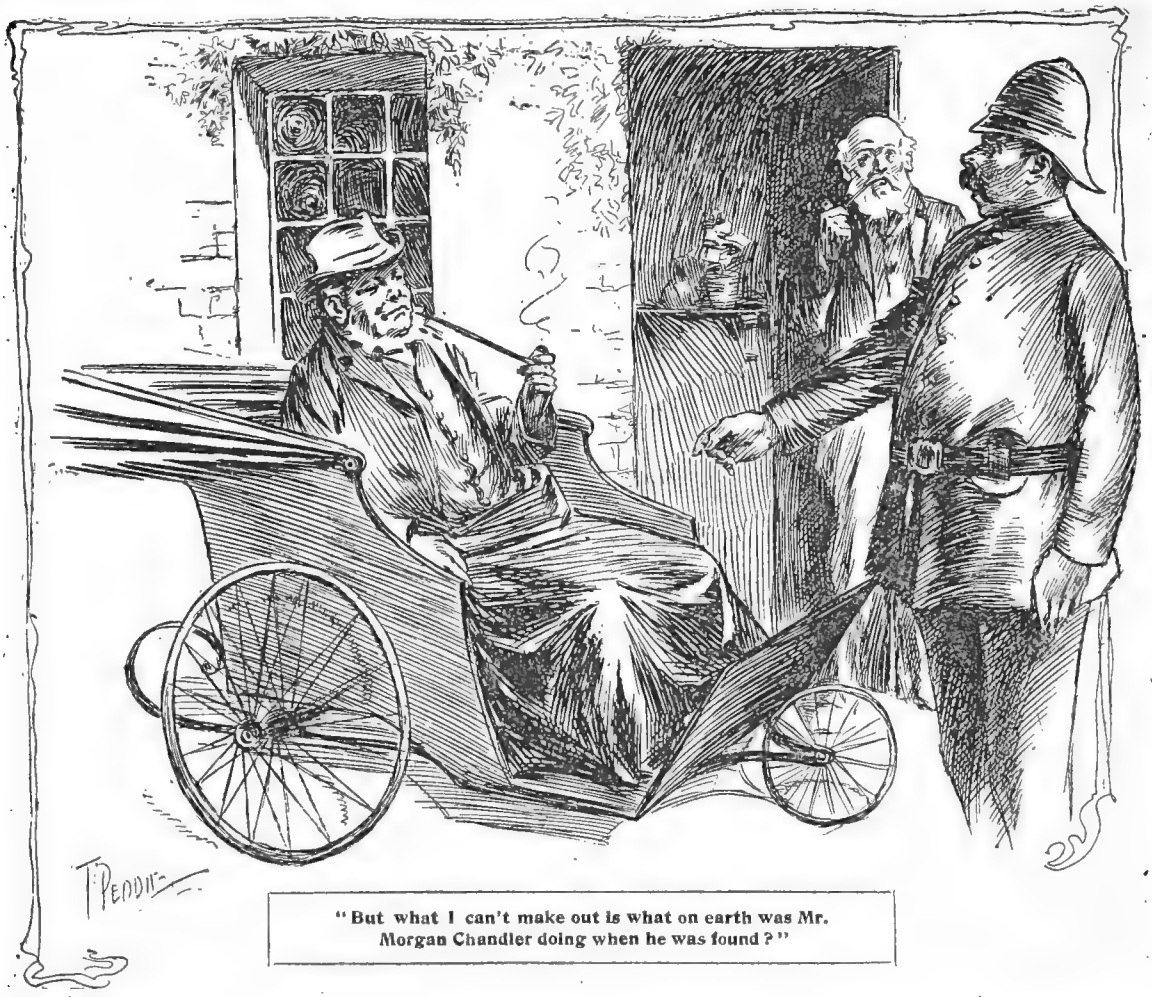
"Downright duffers," asserted Mr. James, "by the side of men like you."

"Well," said Mr. Bingle, "here we are. Rossiter lets young Jack Branscombe slip clean through his fingers, 'cause there's no doubt it was him as got out of the train at Mattingham the other day in a travelling cap and ulster; and, before that job's barely a week old, here's Brettelby Court broken into, the pick o' the plate cleared away, and nobody none the wiser till they begins to look for the silver urn to make the breakfast coffee, and then finds enough had been carted away to stock a silversmith. And in less than no time the thieves is cross-country making a very, very early morning call at Fallowfield Hall."

"Good gracious!" said Mr. Joseph. "How on earth do they do it? However can they get over the ground?"

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google



"But what I can't make out is what on earth was Mr. Morgan Chandler doing when he was found?"

Mr. Bingle placed one finger to the right side of his nose, winked his left eye, and said, with a mysterious nod:

"Bicycles!"

Mr. Joseph Nubbley gave a convulsive start. For a moment his cheeks expanded as he clapped his hand to his mouth, seemingly having swallowed a cloud of tobacco smoke.

"Oh! bicycles?"

"Yes, Mr. Nubbley, bikes."

"Not motor-cars?" inquired Mr. Joseph Nubbley almost severely.

"Tut, tut, no!" replied P.c. Bingle, "we should 'ear 'em, even if we didn't smell 'em, and they leave tracks. Don't you see? The man with the bike he can hide his tracks, he can dismount and carry his bike, he can wheel it over the footpath, and take it across a field of grass," and Mr. Bingle nodded and winked again. The brothers Nubbley exchanged glances.

"What did I tell you?" said James. "Didn't I say as if they'd got this man at Scotland Yard things would be different?"

"You did, James," Joseph acknowledged, with the air of one anxious to render due acknowledgment to a correct forecast. "You certainly did, and I can't deny it."

"But what I can't make out," Bingle went on, warmed to his subject by the approbation and the "square face," "is what on earth was Mr. Morgan Chandler doing where he was found?"

"Where was that?" asked Joseph.

"Oh, of course, you haven't heard the rights of it. When Squire Roylance's alarum woke him he jumped up, and to his horror, found Chandler, his resident land steward, lying stretched on the floor in a pool of blood that had flowed from two severe wounds in his head. He rang for assistance, the doctor was sent for, and they brought Chandler to, but all they can get out of him was that he heard burglars in the Hall, got up and dressed, saw, he believes, three, but he's certain at least there were two, men enter the Squire's room. He rushed in to warn the Squire, and one of 'em took him by the throat and the other smashed him over the head with a crowbar."

"Did he recognise any of 'em?"

"Yes," replied the police-constable, "it appears he swears one of them was Jack Branscombe."

The two brothers exchanged glances.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

"He won't swear to the other one," Bingle proceeded, "but he says he believes it's somebody who owes him a grudge."

"Somebody what owes him a grudge? Who's that?" asked Mr. James.

The police-constable Bingle relapsed into sphinx-like mystery. He had observed Joseph replace the stopper in the square-faced bottle, and, looking at his watch, found it was later than he thought.

"I've got my ideas," he said, "but, of course, I've got to remember my responsibility. Good morning, gentlemen!"

He strode off, somewhat rapidly, for he had just observed Ned Fletcher loafing along the village green in the direction of the Roylance Arms.

And he meant to ask Ned Fletcher a few questions, one of them being where he had spent the night.

When he had gone, James looked at Joseph and whistled, and Joseph, returning James' glance, mysteriously winked.

"Strikes me," said the man in the invalid chair, "Dick's guess ain't quite so wide; young Branscombe's playing a bit of our game on his own."

"Dry up," whispered the other, "here's the kids a-comin' out of school. How beautiful, my brother, is the 'appy face of childhood to gaze upon! Cher cully, don't that school missus, Miss Morrison I think she calls herself, seem to remind you of somebody you've seed afore?"

"Yes," replied Joseph, "I've been trying to fix her face, but I expect it's only a coincydence. She ain't a bad-looking sort of party, and it's only natural, brother James, for you and me to feel sympathetic towards her, seeing as 'ow all the little kiddies love her so, and you and me is as fond of little kiddies as we is of flowers, and sunshine, and little lambs."

And as the children trooped past the gate, brother Joseph placed the square-faced bottle under the apron of the invalid chair and beamed.

And while he beamed, along the winding road past the school-house and the cottage, there came a man on horseback. It was the Squire of Fallowfield, and with due respect the brothers Nubbley lifted their billycock hats, and brother Joseph deflected the sinister eyelid. The Squire courteously acknowledged their salutation, riding by with a face set and imperturbable. Casually he drew his handkerchief from his left cuff, smoothed his black moustache, then rested his right hand, still containing the handkerchief, on his right knee; and Joseph, turning to James, said:

"D'ye see, Cully! You've got a better headpiece nor me. What's that mean in what you and him call the code?"

"That, my brother," said the other, "is the signal, 'lie low, danger ahead.' Hullo, there's the sky pilot droppin' in at the school-house again. It's a werry beautiful thing, my brother, to see a young man like that taking such a lively interest in the eddication of the young."

"To say nothing of the interest he takes in the schoolmissus. Oh, my brother, there seems to be a bond of sympathy between that young man and us. His inclination seems to turn so natural to everything what's bright and innercent."

CHAPTER XVII.

Doris Makes a Confidant.

The Rev. Gerald Hastie having knocked, and a musical mellow voice having said "Come in," entered.

"Good morning, Miss Morrison. I'm not intruding am I? Only I was going by and I remembered one or two school matters I wanted to mention."

"I'm quite glad to see you," said the schoolmistress. "I've got quite a heap of things to talk to you about."

A HUMAN FINGER-POST.

The sight of a woman neatly dressed and in the best of health and spirits acting as finger-post and directing people on their way, is rather a novel one. Yet this is what, in a figurative sense, Mrs. R. Ziegler of 2 Withnall St., Wigan, is doing daily. Chas. Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness restored her to health when she had been in a terrible condition for five years; and all whom she hears of suffering as she did she points to the way of escape. To a *Wigan Examiner* reporter, the other day she said:—"My illness lasted upwards of five years, and in my debilitated state I used to have a feeling that life was scarcely worth living. For days together I was afraid to eat anything, as directly afterwards I was seized with the most horrible pains and other distressing symptoms of indigestion and biliousness. The least effort brought on shortness of breath, and left me for some time as weak as a baby. Palpitation also alarmed me considerably, so that I was really afraid to move. I had pains in my back and side, due to liver and kidney disorder. Then I was weighed down with a dull, tired feeling, making me take quite a melancholy view of life. Frequently my trials were increased by a splitting headache, and chronic constipation was a still further source of trouble. I had medical advice and medicine on many occasions, but with no good result; as in a day or two I became worse than ever. At last, when I was in the depths of despair, I saw in the paper the wonderful manner in which Chas. Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness had cured a case just like my own. I thought, perhaps, they might do me some good at least, and I commenced a course, forthwith. Very glad am I now that I did so, for a few boxes have made me feel like a new woman. The pain in the head and back very soon went, and I found my appetite gradually returning. There was no more of that depressing, uncomfortable feeling after meals. At nights I slept very much better, and when I arose in the morning I felt refreshed and equal to the day's tasks. My increase in strength was very marked. It was a great relief to me to have no more of the palpitation. That has now gone entirely. I now feel better in health than I have done for years, and this I owe entirely to Chas. Forde's Bile Beans. I can conscientiously recommend them to other sufferers."

Bile Beans are superior to all medicines for palpitation, indigestion, biliousness, buzzing and pains in the head, pains in the chest, back and side, fulness after eating, dizziness, sleeplessness, piles, constipation, liver and kidney disorders, nervous and general debility, female ailments, pimples, colds, chill, rheumatism, and as a preventative of influenza. All chemists stock Bile Beans, or a box may be obtained, post free, from the Bile Bean Manufacturing Co., 119 and 120 London Wall, E.C., upon receipt of prices 1s. 1½d. or 2s. 9d.

SONGS COPIED.

Legible as print, 5d. page; transposed correctly, 6d. page. Mrs. Conyers, Morchard Bishop, Devon. Recommended by the Marchioness of Waterford, Lady Arthur Hill, Miss Ellen Terry, etc.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK,

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

2½% DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS 2½%
repayable on demand.

The Birkbeck Almanack, with full particulars, post free
FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager*.

Digitized by Google

"Oh, that's ripping!" Then hastily relapsing into a more suave and clerical tone, he added: "I mean, how truly fortunate that I happened to decide to look in. And how are the kiddies, I mean, the children getting on?"

"They're as good as gold. Of course, they're live children."

"You'd think so if you'd been passing Branberry's orchard just now, ahem!"

"What! my children? Tell me, who were they?"

"Couldn't if I would, wouldn't if I could; whenever I hear sounds of brats up to mischief I systematically look the other way."

"But it's very, very wrong of you," said Miss Morrison, trying not to smile, "and you ought to know better."

"I know I ought, but I don't. You see, I've been there before myself, many a time; I mean to say one is reminded on reflection of the frequency of one's own lapses. Er—let me see, did you say you'd made the stationery account agree?"

And then they went into figures, though Miss Morrison noted with surprise that the curate of Fallowfield was, for a man who had taken mathematical honours at Cambridge, the unreadiest reckoner she had ever encountered, and perhaps it was because Gerry Hastie's eyes kept roving from the figures inside the red lines on the blue paper to the more interesting figure of the lady whose accounts he was checking. Certainly, the schoolmistress, looking up occasionally from long "tots" with the question, "What do you make it?" found the curate's eyes resting on her with an earnest expression, which somehow brought a deeper rose tint to her comely cheeks. But those tiresome accounts at last disposed of, they chatted on other subjects, Gerry dilating ruefully and in detail on the discomforts of bachelors and the helplessness of a young man at the mercy of an elderly lady, and Miss Morrison sympathised.

"I say, that's a nice old racket, I mean to say, a dreadful state of things, up at the Hall," said the curate.

"I heard something of it from the children, what dreadful things keep happening! There seems quite an epidemic of crime in the neighbourhood."

"Yes, it's a rum start, I mean, it's a bit strange, isn't it. One thing's pretty certain, there's a gang, and a desperate gang, working this district."

"Undoubtedly. And do you think Mr. Branscombe is really at the head of it? It's so shocking to think of

She rose and turned from him, not angrily, only deprecatingly.

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

SMALL-POX AND DEAFNESS.

Small-pox, in common with other contagious or exanthematous diseases, scarlet fever, and measles, is a fruitful cause of deafness. The inflammatory processes which affect the membranes of the middle ear in this disease may, in some cases, produce simple catarrhal deafness, but the most frequent result is a purulent condition, with formation of an abscess, perforation of the ear drum, and a discharge from the ear. A third a very rare form of deafness, appearing as a complication of small-pox, is caused by changes in the structures of the labyrinth or internal ear, and is produced through the effect of the disease reacting, through the circulation, upon the terminal filaments of the auditory nerve.

These three forms of deafness, resulting from small-pox, do not differ in their treatment from aural diseases due to other causes, and although generally considered obstinate in character, the results obtained by the Drouet treatment show that all but a very small percentage are curable. Further information on the subject will be found in the "Journal for the Deaf," which can be obtained free by post by addressing the Secretary, 72 Regent's Park Road, N.W.

This publication gives the symptoms of the various forms of deafness and a resumé of upwards of 200 cured cases. Among the cases lately reported as cured by the Drouet treatment the following are of great interest. The first case illustrates how completely the hearing can be restored, although there may be numerous complications. Mr. H. L. applied to the consulting physician of the Drouet Institute for the treatment of deafness complicated by nasal, Eustachian, and middle ear catarrh, anchylosis of the ossicles, labyrinthian and tubal tinnitus, and discharge from the ears. After a course of the Drouet treatment, under the direction of the consulting physician, a letter conveyed to the Institute his surprise at the results obtained:

Exeter, Oct. 6th, 1901.

Dear Sirs,—I am astonished at the remarkable effect of the Drouet treatment in my case. The discharge has entirely disappeared, my voice has a clear ring, and my hearing has become so acute that I can detect the least sound, which means something to me in my occupation, as I have the superintendence of thirty hands in this establishment. Yours truly, H. L.

(Full address of this patient can be obtained from the Drouet Institute.)

When the Rev. John L. Meredith applied for the Drouet treatment, the consulting physician found that the deafness was of a chronic catarral nature, and obstinate in character, as previous special treatment had failed to effect a cure. Under the Drouet treatment, however, as prescribed for catarrhal deafness, the result was satisfactory, as expressed in the following letter:

Fritwell Vicarage, Banbury, July 22nd, 1901.

Dear Sirs,—You will be glad to know that the treatment as prescribed by your consulting physician has had a curative effect. I do not require any more treatment, and shall be pleased to publicly recommend the Drouet Institute for Deafness.—Yours truly, JOHN L. MEREDITH.

Mrs. E. Green, in forwarding the Patient's Report Form, filled out with a description of the case of her child, aged five years and nine months, gave a history of earaches, followed by discharge from the ears, and deafness. This is one of those cases where, if the ears do not receive proper attention, the ailment takes a chronic course.

Fortunately, Mrs. Green, unlike the majority of parents, realised the importance of the case, and placed her child under the Drouet treatment, and, as shown by her letter, a complete cure was obtained:

Lincoln, Aug. 23rd, 1901.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for your letter this morning, and am glad to be able to say my child has quite recovered from the deafness and discharge from the ears, and does not need any more attention.—Thanking you for your kind advice and treatment, yours truly, E. GREEN.

The case of Mr. George Ryder is interesting as an instance of a cure of catarrhal deafness of ten years' duration. When he asked for treatment by correspondence with the Consulting Physician of the Drouet Institute, the difficulty in hearing was so great that the ticking of a watch could not be heard at all with the left ear, and only when within two inches of the right ear. There was the usual history of deafness creeping on gradually, and almost imperceptibly, which is found in cases of chronic catarrhal deafness, with greatly increased difficulty in hearing following the constant succession of colds in the head, to which Mr. Ryder was subject. He suffered much from noises in the ear and dizziness. Appropriate treatment was prescribed and carried out faithfully by Mr. Ryder, under the directions of the Consulting Physician, as given in correspondence, from time to time, with the result that a perfect cure was reported, as follows:

Bishop's Cottage, Woodcock's Hill, Rickmansworth,
Aug. 27th, 1901.

Dear Sirs,—I beg to thank you for your kind letter, also for the great interest you have taken in my case, and I am very pleased to say that I am quite cured. Before I began the treatment I was quite deaf in my left ear, and could only hear the ticking of my watch two inches off with my right ear, and after only going under the treatment you advised me to follow for two months, I was cured. I shall only be too pleased to recommend it to my friends.—Yours faithfully,

GEORGE RYDER.

Nervé deafness, and the formation of adhesions restricting the movement of the ossicles, the minute chain of bones contained in the middle ear, produce a condition that is regarded as almost incurable; yet this was the cause of deafness in the case of Mr. W. J. Saich, who reports himself cured completely, after a careful course of treatment under the direction of the consulting physician of the Drouet Institute. Let it be added that Mr. Saich had been deaf for years, and given up hope of ever obtaining a cure. His letter speaks for itself.

13 Tennyson Road, Stratford, London, E.,
Sept. 24th, 1901.

Dear Sirs,—I am glad to say that the noises in the head have entirely disappeared, and that the hearing has been restored. You can use my name as an endorsement of the Drouet treatment, and I shall recommend to you anyone that suffers from deafness.—Yours faithfully, W. J. SAICH.

The original letter, with all the others of which extracts have been given above, may be seen in the Autograph Room of the Drouet Institute, where hundreds of letters emanating from grateful patients are kept. The Autograph Room is open to the public every day, except Sunday, from ten a.m. to six p.m.

Let us state again that a copy of the "Journal for the Deaf" will be forwarded gratis to any applicant. All persons affected with a disease of the ear, nose, or throat should read it, and also ask for the report form, which will allow them to submit their case to the Drouet Institute. This form is sent free of charge, and the advice given is always gratuitous. For all additional information write to the Secretary of the Drouet Institute, 72 Regent's Park Road, London, N.W.

Personal consultations are held daily, except Sundays, from two to four p.m. In this case a fee is charged for examination. Special consultations may also be had at any time by making an appointment with the Consulting Physician.

Digitized by Google

such a nice fellow, and in his position and with such a romantic interest attaching to him, being implicated in such wickedness. What is your opinion?"

"My opinion, no, not merely my opinion, my firm and absolute conviction is that Jack Branscombe has no more to do with the attack on Morgan Chandler, or with the plate robbery at Brettleby Court, or with the murder at Dalehurst Grange than you or I had."

"But his strange and sudden disappearance, the finding of the weapon in his grounds?"

"Yes, yes, I'll grant that. I'll grant appearances are against him. Yes, there's a chain of circumstantial evidence long enough and strong enough to hang any man, if men were convicted unheard, but we've got to hear some day his side of the story."

"What, when he's caught?"

"No, I prefer to say when he's found, for I believe Jack Branscombe is either dead or under duress."

"I'm so glad to meet somebody who believes in his innocence. I somehow can't think such a nice fellow guilty."

"And I'm glad too to hear you speak like that about my friend, for Jack Branscombe and I were sworn chums, and I'm certain that so good a sportsman couldn't be so bad a man. And then again, Miss Morrison, do you think such a dear girl as Doris Dale, and isn't she a plucked 'un, could love a man who could do such things as that?"

Somehow a strange expression, almost a painful one, came into the winsome, comely face of the schoolmistress, the rose tints for a moment died away from it, leaving it all cream.

"I don't think she could," she said slowly, "if she knew; and yet I can understand there being cases of women loathing evil deeds and yet loving evil men."

"What! After they've found them out?"

"Well, yes, even after they've found them out," and the beautiful grey eyes seemed fixed in a far-away gaze, the gaze of one whose mental vision penetrates the vista of the long ago; so that she seemed oblivious of the ardent gaze that Gerald Hastie was concentrating on her face.

"It seems to me," he said gently, very earnestly, "that the trust and love of a good woman would turn even a bad man towards better ways. I think that any man, good or bad, or middling, would be all the better for the thought that a dear, sweet woman loves him. I know I'm not a very good man, nothing like what I ought to be according to my calling and my cloth, but I am sure that if I could only think that you believed in me, cared for me; oh! if I could only think you loved me, there's no temptation I could not resist and no ordeal that I could not endure."

And, love giving him daring, he took her hand; but she rose and turned from him, not angrily, only deprecatingly.

"No, no!" she said in a choking voice. "You must not dream of that. Gerald Hastie, I do believe in you, and, in a way, I do care for you as a dear, dear friend, I honour you as a brave, faithful Christian gentleman; only—never, oh please! never, never speak to me or think to yourself of being anything more to me than a dear and trusted friend."

"But why—why?" he asked with all a lover's blindness to any reason that he should not gain his heart's delight.

"Gerald," he said, looking him straight in the eyes, "you would grant me any favour in reason that I might ask?"

Feeling that he could do much for her, not merely in, but out of reason, he replied: "Yes, ask what you will for it is granted before you ask if it be in my power."

"It is this," she said. "Please never ask me—why!"

He went his way with, for a while, a bowed head and heart, for he had learnt to love this winsome-faced schoolmistress with the tender face and patient ways; he, the strapping, alert, young athlete, a healthful type of young English manhood, whose wooing would have been welcomed in many quarters, socially and substantially higher, and he would have been more or less than what he was, a thorough man, had he not felt his disappointment. But his was not a nature to despair or to rail at the inevitable.

"There is some obstacle," he said to himself as he strode along the country lane. "I have promised not to ask her; perhaps all in good time that obstacle may cease to be; whether or not, she will always let me be her trusted friend, and that in itself is a happiness to be prized."

He was aroused from his reverie by the sound of wheels and his own name called in a woman's voice. He looked up and returned the greeting of Doris, who was driving alone in her pony chaise. In compliance with her request, he stepped in and took a seat beside her.

"Oh, Gerry dear," said Doris, "it's you I've been wanting to see for days."

"And for days I've been on the point of coming to see you, Doris, only you've had so much trouble I thought you'd like best to be left alone."

"I wish my father were of your way of thinking; dad's very good, but he's one of those who believe the best antidote to a bereavement or other crushing sorrow is a dance or a play."

"I know," said Gerald briskly, "the sort of chap who'd go to a farcical comedy in the evening to forget a funeral in the afternoon. But, Doris, have you any news?"

She was silent for a moment, and he went on: "I'm afraid something very, very serious has befallen Jack, or he'd never be so foolish as to lend colour to the accusations against him by hesitating for one moment to come forward and face them."

"Do you think it is unwise, Gerry, for him to lie low, assuming that he is doing so voluntarily?"

"Unwise! My dear Doris, it is insane. Why, do you know that this latest depredation early this morning, about midnight, at Fallowfield Hall, is laid to his charge?"

"Which proves," said Doris triumphantly, "that in voluntarily absenting himself he is neither unwise nor insane, for he is proving that these terrible acts are the works of others."

"Possibly, if he has reliable evidence that he was elsewhere at the time, but how's he going to prove that? Why, Doris, how strangely you are talking. I believe you know something of his whereabouts. Tell me, for I am his friend and yours, is he safe and sound?"

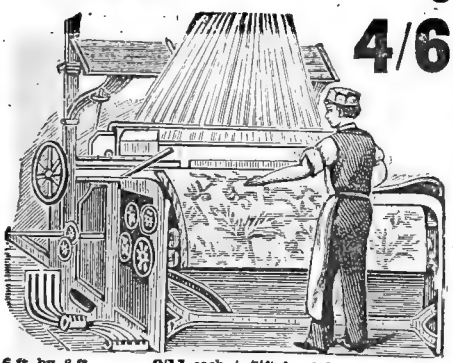
"He is safe so far, Gerry, that the bloodhounds are not yet on the trail, though they are nearer to it than they imagine, are crossing and re-crossing it without picking up the scent. Gerry, I know I can trust you, and oh! it will ease my heart to share my secret with somebody else," and pulling the pony into a walk along a lonely lane, she told Gerald Hastie where Jack lay in hiding. He listened in amazement.

"You brave girl!" he said, "you are breaking the law, but I believe you're helping the ends of justice; you've made one thing clear, that Jack had no part or parcel in last night's affairs, for at that very silent hour when you tell me you, taking advantage of its very silence, took drink and victuals to him, he must, had he been implicated in the events at Brettelby Court and Fallowfield Hall, have been miles away. But it won't do for him to stay there, Doris. Sooner or later he would be caught, and the fact of hiding would be assumed as evidence against him."

(To be continued.)

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google



4/6

To readers of SHORT STORIES, 23/11/1901. On receipt of Postal Order or stamps value 4/6 (Regd.), we will send you the **Largest Genuine Reversible Carpet in Brussels Finish, with Rug,** ever sold, at the Price, direct from the Looms to any address on receipt of amount. Suitable for Drawing-room, Dining-room, Bedroom, &c., bordered and woven in Brussels Patterns, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any middle profit. Remember, these are woven, and are made of a material almost equal to wool. Thousands of these Carpets have been already sold at double these prices.

SPECIAL OFFER.—2 CARPETS AND 2 RUGS, 8s.

Illustrated Bargain Catalogues of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Linoleums, Bedsteads, Table Linen, Curtains, etc., post free, if, when writing, you mention "Short Stories," 2/11/1901.

REAL BRUSSELETTE CARPETS

Admittedly the Marvel of the Age.

Woven and Reversible, rich Brussels and Turkey Patterns and Colourings, superior quality, with handsome Border to match. A Marvel of Excellence and Beauty. These Carpets are superb imitations of real Brussels, and except by the closest scrutiny, the difference cannot be detected.

REDUCED SALE PRICES.

6 ft. by 6 ft. ... ... 2/11 each.	7½ft. by 9 ft. ... ... 5/11 each.	9 ft. by 12 ft. ... ... 9/6 each.	12 ft. by 12 ft. ... ... 12/9 each.	12 ft. by 18 ft. ... ... 19/6 each.
6 ft. by 7½ft. ... ... 3/11 „	9 ft. by 9 ft. ... ... 7/6 „	9 ft. by 15 ft. ... ... 12/6 „	12 ft. by 13½ft. ... ... 14/6 „	12 ft. by 21 ft. ... ... 22/6 „
6 ft. by 9 ft. ... ... 4/9 „	9 ft. by 10½ft. ... ... 8/6 „	10½ft. by 12 ft. ... ... 11/6 „	12 ft. by 15 ft. ... ... 15/9 „	

In ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

A Reversible Brusselette Hearthrug (Reg.) to match above Carpets, sent for 1/6 extra, size 2yd. long and 1yd. wide.

SPECIAL OFFER.—Three Hearthrugs for 4/3; or Six for 8/- Sterling Value.

To Readers of SHORT STORIES, 23/11/1901, Offered

A STOCK OF 10,000 PATENT WADDED QUILTS, TORALIUMS, OR BED COVERS

(as illustration), at an enormous reduction to clear out.

SALE 3/6 PRICE.

Postage, 6d. extra.

Covered with beautiful soft Oriental Sateen Chintz, and on reverse side another beautiful floral design, size 50in. by 60in.

SPECIAL OFFER.—3 Quilts for 10/-, or 6 for 19/6, or 12 for 38/-

Cheques and P.O.'s payable to

F. HODGSON & SONS, Manufacturers, Importers, and Merchants, **Woodsley Road, LEEDS.**

COLOSSAL SALE OF RICH VELVET PILE

REAL BRUSSELS CARPETS.

Extraordinary Heavy, very Best Quality, Newest and Choicest Designs. In Old Gold, Sultan, Terra Cotta, Crimson, Sky, Navy, and the latest colours. With handsome border to correspond. Guaranteed to wear for years and give every satisfaction. The sizes and prices as follows (all ready for putting down):

REDUCED SALE PRICE LIST.

4½ft. by 7 ft. 11/-	Velvet Pile Brussels Carpet Squares.	9 ft. by 12 ft. 38/-	
6 ft. by 9 ft. 18/-		11 ft. by 12 ft. 47/-	
7½ft. by 9 ft. 23/-		12 ft. by 13½ft. 59/-	
9 ft. by 9 ft. 28/-		12 ft. by 16 ft. 69/-	
9 ft. by 10½ft. 33/-		12 ft. by 18 ft. 77/-	

Altogether superior quality, with handsome border to correspond. A Marvel of excellence and beauty. Thousands of repeat orders and testimonials received, giving the highest satisfaction. When ordering, please mention if for Bed, Dining, Drawing, or Sitting Room, and any particular colour preferred.

Also **Rich Velvet Pile Stair Carpets,** bordered to match, 18in. wide, 1/8 per yard; 21in. wide, 2/- per yard: 27in. wide, 2/3 per yard.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

THE "GEO. R. SIMS" HAIR RENEWER "TATCHO"

COUPON

This Coupon entitles the holder to a Large Size

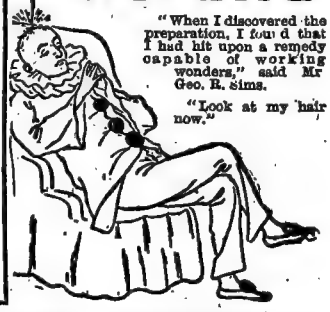
4/6

Trial Bottle of Mr. Geo. R. Sims' Hair Renewer for

1/10

post free.

S.S. Nov. 23.



"When I discovered the preparation, I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders," said Mr Geo. R. Sims.

"Look at my hair now."

MRS. BROWN POTTER, whose beautiful hair is the envy of her sex, writes:

"I Use only 'TATCHO.'"

If your hair is falling or failing, you have your remedy. Don't hesitate. Use "TATCHO." The result will surprise you and will be intensely gratifying. It is sold in bottles by Chemists and Hairdressers all over the world, 2/9 and 5/- or may be had direct in plain sealed package, post free, 2/11 and 5/3. Address:

"Tatcho" Offices, 81c Great Queen St., London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

THE MOST ASTOUNDING WORK OF MODERN TIMES.

Every year thousands of new books are published. They are read and forgotten. But once in a hundred years a new book appears which THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR. It contains some new truth which alters the history of mankind. Such a book has been issued, and is pronounced by the Press to be the **MOST REMARKABLE WORK OF THE CENTURY.** You will read it. If not to day, then some other day, for sooner or later it will be read by all men and all women. The writer of the book is Professor Boyd Laynard, who is now recognised as the greatest living authority on personal hygiene. The name of the book is "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE." Its sale is rapidly approaching

ONE MILLION

copies.

The publishers have issued a popular edition, at a price within the reach of all, so that the book may find a place in every home. The work is arranged in 127 chapters, the whole of which (in the popular edition now offered to the public) is bound in one volume. The book, although published at Two Shillings, will, if ordered direct from the Publishers, be forwarded to readers of Short Stories, carriage paid, at the low discount price of

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

Among the numerous subjects dealt with, the following are but few. A complete syllabus, showing the contents of the whole of the **127 CHAPTERS,** enumerating upwards of **500 SUBJECTS** and divisions of subjects, can be had free on application to the Publishers:—

The way we make our own faces—Secrets of face transformation—Changeableness of beauty and its causes—Some strange facts concerning the variableness of beauty—"Odd-faced" beauty—The countenance the counterpart of the mind—How pleasing expressions become permanent—How a person's habitual look is acquired—How permanent expressions can be transformed—Metaphysical secrets of keeping young and preserving a youthful appearance—The author's investigations into the causes why some individuals look younger than others at a certain age—Discovery of a great metaphysical secret—Wonders of the skin—Effects of mental emotions upon the skin—Bad complexions and their causes—Diet that spoils and diet that improves the complexion—General care of the complexion—Construction, growth, and wonders of the hair—Why hair falls out—Premature greyness: its causes and prevention—General care of the hair—Superfluous hairs and how to treat them—Wrinkles: their prevention and treatment—Freckles, tan, and blackheads—Oily skin, dry skin, and loose skin—How the nose can be improved—Protruding ears and their treatment—Offensive breath—Anatomy of the teeth—Why teeth decay—General care of the teeth—Tallness, and how to attain it—Round shoulders and how to cure them—How to acquire a full chest—Perfect form and figure: their proper proportions—Thinness, and its treatment—Excessive stoutness—Care of the hands—Care of the feet—Physiognomy; or, the art of reading character from the face—Mental influences upon health—Power of the mind over the body—Influence of the mind in curing diseases—How the mind can cause dyspepsia—Effect of the direction of thought to the heart—How real diseases often supervene upon fancied ailments—How violent passions injure health—Laughter as a medicine—Ailments cured by laughter—Wonders of digestion—Relative value to our bodies of the principal articles of food—Fruits and vegetables as medicine: their various influences upon the physical system—Health-preserving diet and its consistency—Diet favourable to mental exertion and intellectual culture—Influence of various foods upon our passions and propensities—The influence exerted by the mind upon the appetite and digestion—Some perilous articles of food—Exercise and its relation to health—Baths and bathing: their influence upon health—The way we breathe, and how it affects our health—The marriage state, and its influence upon health—Statistics showing the comparative vitality of married and single persons—100 professions, trades, and occupations: their respective influences upon health and long life—Sleep, and its relation to health—Insomnia, and its treatment—The eyes, and how to preserve them—The ears and hearing: how to prevent deafness—The voice: its cultivation and preservation—Memory, and how to improve it—Sudden failure of memory—Rules for cultivating the memory—Influence of diet upon memory—Stammering, and how to cure it—Prevention of disease—Nervousness—Blushing: its physiology and treatment—Rules of life for attaining longevity—Compendium of the mental, moral, physical, and external influences that lessen the years of our earthly existence—How to live to a hundred—Premature old age and its causes—Short biographies of 30 modern centenarians, whose ages range from 115 to 185 years—General principles that can be laid down for the anticipation of longevity—The eight signs of long life.

ORDER FORM. **415216.**

To HAMMOND, HAMMOND & CO.,
19, 21, and 23 Ludgate Hill, London.

Please forward me Professor Boyd Laynard's complete work, "SECRETS OF BEAUTY, HEALTH, AND LONG LIFE" (carriage paid), for which I enclose the sum of One Shilling and Sixpence.

Name.....

Address.....

Digitized by Google

Short Stories That . . . . . Make You Laugh.

We devote every week space in *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. To those readers who submit storyettes which are used, a six shilling novel will be awarded. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case, the source MUST be stated. Attempts must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, November 25th. Postcards only, please. The prize of £1 1s. for the best storyette published this week has been won by Miss F. Ray, of 9 Reynoldson Street, Durham Road, Sunderland, whose contribution is denoted by an asterisk thus.*

Professional Instinct.

HUSBAND (the father of six daughters): "Come, Rosa, there is a gentleman in the drawing-room who wants to marry one of our daughters. He is a wine merchant." Wife: "A wine merchant. Heaven be praised. Then he will be sure to select one of the older brands!"

It Wasn't Dark Enough for Gas.

A SERVANT who had suffered from toothache very severely was sent by her mistress to a dentist to have the tooth out. On the following morning the mistress asked her servant if she had had the tooth out with gas. "No, mum," replied the servant, "I got there in plenty of time to have it out in daylight."

He Had To Return It.

SMALL BOY: "I picked up a shilling in the road today, father." Fond Father: "And you restored it to the owner, I suppose?" Small Boy: "Yes, sir." Father: "That's a good, honest boy." Small Boy (conscience-stricken): "Well, father, you see I couldn't very well help it. The man had me by the ear and wouldn't let me go!"

Closely Connected.

"Is the editor-in-chief in?" asked a stranger, as he sauntered into the office at eight o'clock in the morning. "No, sir," replied the doorkeeper, kindly, "he does not come so early. Is there anything I can do?" "Perhaps so. Are you connected with the poetical department of the paper?" "I am, sir." "Oh, what do you do?" "I empty the waste-paper baskets, sir."

The "Board of Health." *

A COUNTRYMAN walking along the streets of London found his progress stopped by a barricade of wood. "What's this for?" said he to a person standing by. "Oh, that's to stop the fever from spreading," replied the other, by way of being jocose. "Ah," said the countryman," I've often heard of the Board of Health, but I never saw it afore."

That Was All.

A LITTLE five-year old boy recently came home from school, which he had only been attending a few days, and his mother asked him what he had been doing. "Writin' M's and shakin' awful," was the child's pathetic reply, which meant that a long course of M's in a copy-book he had gone through had tried his nerves. "Well, how do you make an M?" his mother asked. "Oh, you go up a hill and down a hill, and up a hill and down a hill, and stay there."

No Danger!

IT was during the small-pox scare, and a number of people were waiting in a health office to be vaccinated. "What is your profession?" asked the doctor, speaking to a well-dressed man. "I am a detective," was the reply. "A detective, eh!" exclaimed the doctor, "then you'll not need to be vaccinated, because there is no fear of you catching anything."

He Had Tried It.

MRS. WALLACE: "Did you read about that poor man who stole a loaf of bread, and made the defence that he was starving?" Mr. Wallace: "Was it home-made bread?" "What has that to do with it?" "Because, if it was, he was lying. A starving man would not have the strength to run away with a loaf of home-made bread."

Appreciated.

"AH!" said the editor, as the young poet came in, "that last thing was good. We were much pleased with it." "Well, in that case," said the poet, "I will withdraw what I said in my letter about not liking the way you treated me, and declaring that I should send you no more of my work." "Oh, that's all right," replied the editor, with heartless cruelty. "That letter is what I referred to."

Unkind.

"I WENT in to bathe," said the story-teller, "but before I was long in the water I saw a huge double-jawed shark making rapidly towards me. What was to be done? When he was within about a yard of me I faced round, dived under the shark, and taking a knife from my pocket, killed him with one stroke." "But did you bathe with your clothes on?" asked an astonished listener. "Well," answered the story-teller reproachfully; "well, I do think you needn't be so particular!"

Worked Splendidly.

BROWN: "What puts you in such a good-humour this morning?" Robinson: "I've just got a patent for my new infallible ink eraser. I wouldn't take £10,000 for it." "Didn't you get a patent last year for inventing an indelible ink?" "I did, and I sold it for £6,000, and now I've invented an eraser that will even remove writing done with my own indelible ink." "What are you going at next?" "I'm going to invent another indelible ink that can't be erased with my new eraser. I tell you, there is money in this patent business if you only go about it the right way."

Mistaken Identity.

THERE is a pretty story told of the late Lord Granville at a naval review. Though advanced in years, as in honours, he was accustomed on such occasions to don a simple costume of navy blue and a peaked cap, in which it is not everyone who looks like one of his Majesty's Ministers. In this dress he took his station at the foot of the ladder by which the members got on board their vessel, as he wanted to see some of his friends. Mr. C——was one of them, and as he descended with his daughter his lordship held out his hand. Mr. C—— did not see it, being engaged in conversation with someone behind him, but the young lady did. "Papa," said she, turning to her father, "here is the man for the tickets."

Is your photo on page 652?

Digitized by Google

THE EDITOR'S PAGE.

A Half-guinea Fountain Pen will each week be awarded to the reader who is the sender of the most interesting query answered on this page.

"J. C. K." writes that he has been sending attempts for the Storyette Competition for some time, and has not yet been successful in obtaining a prize. He lives at Liverpool, which he says I seem to have forgotten in making awards, as during the last two years the first prize has only twice gone to Liverpool.

It is not my fault, "J. C. K.," that Liverpudlians are not so successful as you think they should be. I have no grudge against them. Each anecdote is carefully read and the prize is awarded to the sender of the best. Don't give up trying because you have not yet won a prize. Your perseverance is sure to be rewarded some day—perhaps when you least expect it.

❦❦❦

ONE of my correspondents sends me the following interesting anecdote: "Fifty years ago a man was driving a drove of ducks before him down Old Street, St. Luke's, E.C., allowing persons who bought to choose the ones they would have. I stood at my door as they passed and selected two of them. There are now between six and seven thousand vehicles, besides tramcars and 'buses, passing and repassing through the same street daily."

Truly the times have changed!

❦❦❦

TWO more claims have been made in connection with the Photo Competition this week, and £5 notes have been sent to:

MRS. CRASK (No. 26),
27 Maidstone Road,
Lowestoft.

MR. GEO. R. SIMS (No. 28),
12 Clarence Terrace,
Regent's Park,
London, N.W.

❦❦❦

IT will be observed that one of the winners this week is Mr. G. R. Sims, the well-known playwright and journalist. He had no idea that his photograph was in *Short Stories* until he saw it there. That may be exactly the case with you. So keep your eye open every week when Tuesday comes round.

ADVICE TO READERS ON VARIOUS MATTERS.

(Replies to Correspondents.)

"BENEDICK" wants to know why the "best man" at a wedding is so called. "I should have thought," says "Benedick," "that the man about to be married might at least be called the best man, even if in actual fact he were the worst present."

The "best man" is a survival of the days when a bachelor must capture the girl of his heart and carry her off to the altar by main force, if he wished to marry her—a custom which still obtains in some savage countries. Obviously, then, it would be to his advantage to have a few friends handy to keep the ground in case of opposition; obviously, also, he would choose men of brawn and substance—in fact, the "best men" obtainable. Now that the preliminaries are conducted with more decorum, one "best man" is sufficient. His duties consist in finding the ring at the critical moment, and assuring the groom from time to time that his tie has *not* worked up behind.

"JACK" has been arguing with a friend as to the number of diseases to which the human frame is liable. His friend says 150, and he says more like 1,500.

You are nearest, although a long way off. There are altogether about 2,400. When a man gets rheumatism, though, he begins to think that the whole lot have struck him in a heap. I know.

"HOUSEWIFE" writes: "What a tremendous amount of tea must be wasted every day in this country through insufficient or careless brewing! Can you give me any idea of the quantity?"

I believe it is estimated that at least ten per cent. of the total quantity used is absolutely wasted by careless brewing, chiefly exemplified by the addition of water which is not boiling, and which, consequently, fails to extract the invigorating properties of the tea-leaf as it should. A great deal of waste, too, is caused by persons putting more tea into the pot than is necessary. It will very often be found that when a party of three or four has to be supplied with tea, enough leaf is used to, with proper brewing, satisfy the needs of twice as many people. Ten per cent., indeed, is a very low estimate of the amount of waste; but even granting that it is not exceeded, it is a wonderful example of the tremendous aggregate result of numerous small acts of carelessness, for, assuming it to be exactly correct, the weight of tea which is thus literally thrown away daily in this country amounts to more than 115 tons, which, at a low average price of 1s. 6d. per pound, would represent a value of nearly £20,000.

"GIRLIE" asks if it is a fact that pressing the upper lip is a preventive of sneezing?

Yes, that is so; and if you are an observer of human nature, you will have noticed that sneezing is anything but prevalent amongst engaged couples.

"F. H." asks: "Has there ever been a King of the Isle of Wight?"

In the fifteenth century a Duke of Warwick was created King of the Isle of Wight by Henry VI. The latter placed a crown upon the Duke's head with his own hands, but as the honour did not carry with it the lordship of the island, which was held by the Duke of Gloucester, and was not continued to the descendants, it must be regarded as an empty one.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0	10	0
Double " " "	1	0	0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10	0	0
Half-page " " "	5	0	0
Quarter-page " "	2	10	0
Eighth-page " "	1	5	0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, November 26th, if intended for the issue on sale December 10th, and dated December 14th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed by HORACE COX, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

"To have a body rich in health,
Is to possess the greatest wealth."

Fry's PURE CONCENTRATED

300
Gold Medals, &c.

Cocoa.

N.B.—Sold only in tins with gilt tops.

"The richest in flesh-forming and energy producing constituents.
There is No Better Food."

—Dr. ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E., &c.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

Old False Teeth Bought.

Many people have old or disused false teeth. Messrs. R. D. & J. B. Fraser Ltd., of Princes Street, Ipswich (established 1833), buy old false teeth. If you send your teeth to them they will remit you by return of post the utmost value; or if preferred, they will make you the best offer, and hold the teeth over for your reply. The largest and oldest buyers of old false teeth in the world.

PAY 2 PENCE DAILY

Any respectable person, male or female can obtain one of our fully warranted cycles, on easy payments of 1/- or more weekly. Thousands are doing it. No guarantors required. Mutual trust between our patrons and ourselves. Nobody need know you are buying on instalments. Catalogue Free. — SYMONDS' LONDON STORES, 66 Hatton Garden, London.

A GUARANTEED CURE.

For ECZEMA AND ALL SKIN ERUPTIONS.

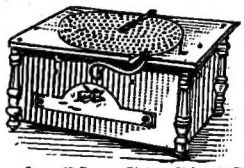
A victim, who was cured after five years' suffering, will gladly send full particulars of an inexpensive, guaranteed Cure on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—PACIDERMA, 21 Piccadilly, London, W.

SULPHOLINE LOTION.

For clearing the skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

SHILLING BOTTLES.

HAND-ORGANS from 20s.



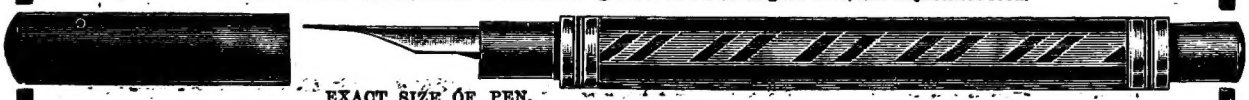
Made in 3 sizes, ebony and gold case. With 6 metal tunes. Full organ tone. Plays songs, hymns, dance music. Sent on receipt of 4s. P.O., if desired. Write for terms to pay 4s. monthly. Price list and tunes. ATLAS CO., 184a High St., Camden Town, London; 63 Seven Sisters Rd. 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9, and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business. GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS, 148 Old Street, London, E.C. (Please mention paper.)

A GUINEA FOUNTAIN PEN FOR 2/6.

This Pen, post free 2/6, consists of a beautifully-chased vulcanite barrel, finished with an "Imperial" gold band at top and bottom, with accurately-fitting cap, one of our everlasting wear real electro gold nibs, and adjustable feed.



EXACT SIZE OF PEN.

Send us your order, together with Postal Order for 2/6, and you will receive pen by return post.

Address: THE SWIFT FOUNTAIN PEN CO. (Dept. S.), 62 Cowcross Street, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

Cadbury's Cocoa

ABSOLUTELY PURE. therefore BEST.

CADBURY's Cocoa, on the testimony of the *Lancet*, "represents the standard of highest purity." It is entirely free from all foreign substances, such as Kola, Malt, Hops, &c., nor is alkali used to darken the colour (and so deceive the eye).

CADBURY's Cocoa is a Perfect Food.

BIRD'S CUSTARD POWDER

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS.

When the Pie was opened,
The birds began to sing—
"The Praises of Bird's Custard Powder
Will make the whole world ring."

BIRD'S CUSTARD is pure, creamlike, nutritious, and easily digested, therefore is eminently suitable for invalids. It is a wholesome, delicious article of diet, for universal consumption. Eggs often disagree; BIRD'S Custard never.

BIRD'S Custard Powder makes a perfect high-class Custard at a minimum of cost and trouble. Used by all the leading Diplomées of the South Kensington School of Cookery. Invaluable also for a variety of Sweet Dishes, recipes for which accompany each packet.

NO EGGS! NO RISK! NO TROUBLE!

Digitized by Google